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# Lawrence Mayor Stops Homeless Dinners

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PHOTO: JONATHAN STEVENS

A group of volunteers called "The Movement Family" (TMF) have been serving hot meals to the homeless at the Buckley Garage in Lawrence for the last six months without incident. Now, Lawrence Mayor Dan Rivera has called a halt to the homeless dinners.

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# VALLEY PATRIOTS OF THE MONTH

## HERO IN OUR MIDST - PETER FANTASIA, 102-YR-OLD WORLD WAR II US ARMY MEDIC

**John Cuddy**  
VALLEY PATRIOT HERO REPORTER

Somerville's Peter Fantasia, now living in Reading, Massachusetts at the Artis Senior Living, vividly described to me how he got captured near Rodalbe, France. While serving with Lima Company, of the 3rd Battalion, of the 104th Regiment, of the 26th Infantry Division,

the "Yankee Division" as an Army Medic, he was tending to two wounded American soldiers, an NCO and an Officer, when a German Infantryman with the 11th Panzer Division cornered the three Americans in their fox hole. Peter said to the wounded American sergeant "I'll dive right, you shot him", to that the German soldier replied, in an American Southern drawl, "I would not do that if I

were you". The three American soldiers had the misfortune of being captured by a German soldier who was raised in Arkansas.

For his book and film, Band of Brothers, Stephen Ambrose interviewed Technical Sergeant Donald George Malarkey, who was a non-commissioned officer with Easy Company, 2nd Battalion, 506th Parachute Infantry Regiment, in the 101st Airborne Division of the United States Army during World War II. Don Malarkey recalled a very similar incident, but with reversed roles, when he asked a German soldier who was recently captured by the US Army, where he was from, Sgt Malarkey was shocked when the man replied in perfect English, "I am from Oregon!"

What were these two young German Soldiers, who were raised in the United States, even doing in Germany? Economic conditions in both the United States and Germany were very bleak during the Great Depression, and facing anti-immigrant sentiment in the United States, many Germans and Italians returned to Europe. These immigrants left because, perhaps because being poor and hungry with your extended family in your native land of Italy or Germany, was better than being poor and hungry in the United States. In the States, during the Great Depression, the immigrants found themselves surrounded by equally poor, but native born Anglo Americans, who did not want them in their neighborhoods, their factories, or applying for



scarce American jobs. My interview with Peter confirmed that this anti-immigrant sentiment existed even in Somerville, Massachusetts. Peter recalled how his father could not purchase a home in certain Somerville neighborhoods, due to the fact that he was a recent immigrant from Gaeta, Italy. Many German immigrants in the United States and Canada, where also German Nationalists, and returned to Germany when Hitler rose to power and encouraged all Aryan's to return to the Fatherland.

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# What “The Movement Family” Proved About the Homeless Crisis

If there is one thing that Michael Gorman and his volunteers at TMF (The Movement Family) have proved over the last six months, it’s that helping the homeless and making people’s lives better only takes one thing: effort.

For six months TMF offered food, clothing, detox services, transitional housing, and other counseling services to the homeless one night a week at the Buckley Garage on Common Street in Lawrence. (See story page 5).

Their rate of success was staggering. In the six months they operated out of the Buckley Garage, TMF fed hundreds of people and was able to get more than 20 homeless people into detox and transitional housing. Countless homeless people sought other services like psychological counseling and spiritual relief. In short, TMF was putting a big dent in the homeless problem, while local officials whined that the problem was too big to solve.

TMF didn’t do this by having meetings, grandstanding in front of cameras, or running for public office. They did it by showing up with food. The did it by actually talking to them and ASKING them what they needed. TMF then sought the help of Tewksbury Detox, reached out to local church groups, and simply did the work of caring for people who have no place to go - with no idea how to get out of the rut they are in - no questions asked.

WHY ARE ALL THE HOMELESS IN LAWRENCE?

There is no doubt that the opioid crisis has fueled the homeless crisis across the country.

The Merrimack Valley seems to have been hit particularly hard. Yet, local officials in suburbs like Andover, North Andover, and Methuen offer zero services for their citizens who become homeless. There are no homeless shelters in Methuen or Andover. There are no transitional housing programs in North Andover or Boxford, and no soup kitchens in Groveland or Georgetown.

That means if you live in those towns and find yourself addicted and out in the cold, there’s only one place for you to go

for help, Lawrence.

That’s why most of the homeless people in Lawrence are not actually from Lawrence, something that rightfully irks Lawrence officials, including Lawrence Mayor Dan Rivera.

And while we agree that suburban communities need to start doing their fair share to help their own citizens, that’s a long term issue that requires long term solutions. It’s not going to be resolved today.

What Michael Gorman and TMF are doing helps homeless people today - right now - when the temperature is 8 degrees, and they are hungry, with no blankets, while sleeping out in the cold.

Local officials could learn something from TMF. Having meetings about meetings, and grandstanding at “summits” solves nothing. Dismissing the problem as something that the state and federal government should solve helps even less. Simply moving the homeless out of public view - as Lawrence Mayor Dan Rivera has done - actually makes the problem worse. If we are going to begin to tackle the homeless and addiction problem here in the Valley we have to start with local officials getting off their backsides, going out into the community, and actually helping people.

We are disgusted that most non-profits in this area only seem to care about the homeless when they can get rich off government grants. We are disgusted that local elected officials have ignored the problem and treated the issue as a nuisance rather than a crisis.

But, mostly we are saddened to see that while Mike Gorman and TMF have stepped up to the plate, they have been stopped from doing so in a city like Lawrence, where the need is the greatest and the human devastation is the worst.

Thank you Michael Gorman and TMF for showing us with your actions that more can be done to help solve this problem, and that the answer is not relying on the government. If only more people would take your lead, stop pretending that they care, and actually go out and do something about it. ♦

## Identity Politics and the Rise of 21st Century Witch Hunts

**Ken Willette, Jr.**  
VALLEY PATRIOT COLUMNIST

When I review Left-leaning social media memes and comments, I almost always have one of two reactions:--that either the people circulating these social media bombs watched Star Wars or V for Vendetta far too many times. Or that they are woefully ignorant of American history. Maybe, a little bit of both! I really want to offer a free history lesson the next time I see a person wearing a ‘Resist’ hat.

What exactly are you resisting?

One of the bedrock principles that this nation was founded upon is that you can have policy disagreements without resorting to political violence. You won’t hear a knock at your door in the middle of the night by a secret police force destined to send you and your loved ones to a prison camp or a reeducation facility. Obviously, that very scenario routinely occurred to tens of millions of helpless souls in communist and socialist dictatorships. Somehow the GOP has suddenly become the Evil Empire, and the Leftists represent the Rebel Alliance—fighting, at all costs, to save the last vestiges of our constitutional republic. But even a basic knowledge of history would go a long way in refuting the claims of the opposition.

First, let’s discuss the social media lunacy of playing the race card against the GOP. Since the days of the Civil War, every successful constitutional amendment and every significant civil rights law,

directly aiding the progress and equality of African Americans, has been ultimately achieved as the result of courageous GOP leadership and pivotal GOP votes. Even when not in control of the White House, Republican votes were needed to overcome Southern led filibusters. The GOP literally liberated millions of people from bondage. Republicans had no hesitation in stationing troops in Southern states to preserve the humanitarian mission of Reconstruction. Eisenhower sent federal troops to Little Rock in order for African American students to go to school as a result of the Brown v. Board of Education decision. In addition to his strong record on pushing through civil rights legislation in the 1950s, Nixon actually accelerated school desegregation in the South during his presidency. Republican presidents have routinely selected minorities to serve in their cabinets, lead the armed forces and serve in the highest courts in the land.

But now we are supposed to ignore centuries of American history to assign the Death Star role to today’s GOP. Why must we wash away from history the promotion of slavery in the solidly Democratic South, the breakup of the Union, the true and dastardly (resistance) of Southern leaders during Reconstruction, the advent of Jim Crow laws, the denial of basic human rights and the outright murder of thousands of African Americans--without justice and recourse? And don’t forget those merciless

POLITICS: PAGE 16

## CAMPBELL’S CORNER with Linda Dean

### Governor Baker Signs Civics Education Bill

Governor Baker recently signed into law a bill filed by Senator Harriette Chandler and myself that will enhance non-partisan civics education in our public schools. This legislation exposes students to the founding documents of our country, the fundamentals of our legal system, the roles and responsibilities of the three branches of government, and many other fundamental elements of how our democracy works. Representative Andy Vargas also played a key role in the development and passage of this legislation.

The law expands the required civics curriculum taught in public schools to include news media literacy, the responsibility of citizenship, and the functions of the branches of local, state, and federal government. It also establishes a High School Voter Challenge program to increase voter registration and pre-registration for eligible students.

In order to promote a hands-on approach to civics, the law also requires every public middle and high school to provide one non-partisan, student-led civics project for each student. The projects can be individual, small group, or class-wide and will help students understand how local, state, and federal policies affect their schools and communities. Other project goals include learning to engage in civil discourse, consider different points of view, and make logical arguments supported by evidence. Students in eighth grade will have the opportunity to present their projects at a statewide civics fair called the Commonwealth Civics Challenge.

Finally, the law directs the state to give information to cities and towns about how to promote youth membership on local boards, committees, and commissions. This will help our youth to gain real experience with local issues and municipal governance.

The legislation was drafted with input from Democratic and Republican legislators from all parts of the Commonwealth and received widespread bipartisan support throughout the legislative process. After first being sent to the Governor’s desk in July, the bill was returned to the Legislature with two minor amendments. A compromise was reached to address the Governor’s concerns and make certain that civics education remained non-partisan. The final bill was sent back to the Governor’s desk at the end of October and signed shortly thereafter. With this new law, our students will gain the skills to form their own opinions and engage with the political process. This is good for our communities, good for Massachusetts, and good for democracy at large.

*State Representative Linda Dean Campbell represents the cities of Methuen and Haverhill in the State Legislature and currently serves as Vice Chair of the Revenue Committee. She can be reached at Linda.Campbell@mahouse.gov or at 617-722-2380. ♦*

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# “WEATHER 101” WITH AL!

Al Kaprielian  
VALLEY PATRIOT WEATHERMAN

Welcome to December which will bring the official start to winter. With the winter solstice this month this will give us the shortest day of the year. Once we past the winter solstice the days will slowly begin to get longer once again. Recapping November it was a wet month with above normal rainfall.

The first eight days featured warm weather and then a big change occurred in the weather pattern. This change was caused by a southward plunge to the jet stream which brought much colder air to the region for the rest of November. This much colder air from Canada north of the jet stream gave us our first significant snowfall on November 15th.

About six to nine inches of snow occurred over interior northern MA into southern New Hampshire. With the cold air over the region this produced a mainly light and fluffy snowfall. Snow can occur in November it is not impossible. This coastal low pressure system tracked off of Cape Cod & the Islands putting us on the colder side of the storm. Even though November started warm the temperatures for the month averaged below normal. Boston averaged two degrees below normal, Manchester NH averaged just over five degrees below normal. On Thanksgiving Day we saw very cold temperatures despite the dry weather.

This cold air came down from Canada. The cold temperatures made it feel more like January on Thanksgiving Day. This very cold arctic air did not last long and was replaced by seasonable temperatures for the latter part of November. The upper level trough (disturbance) which developed over the central and eastern US gave us above normal rainfall for November. Blue Hill Observatory in MA had its wettest November on record.

On Monday night November 26 we had another heavy rain event with many areas getting over an inch of rain. This storm also produced strong winds along the coast Monday night November 26th into Tuesday morning November 27th. High Wind Warnings occurred along the coast south of Boston to Cape Cod & the Islands.

A Wind Advisory was in effect for

Boston and points north along the coast. This storm also produced heavy wet snow north & west of Concord, NH where a foot plus of snow fell. Madison NH got 14”, Wilmot NH got 15” Sunapee NH got 10” much less occurred over southern NH where Nashua got less than an inch.

Due to the heavy wet nature of the snow this caused numerous power outages north and west of Concord NH. The snow was heavy and wet due to the lack of arctic air. This heavy wet snow builds up on trees and power lines causing them to snap and fall. In some areas the power was out for a while until utility crews could get there to restore the power. Now with December here what can we expect? First daily high temperatures will get colder due to the shorter days. We can get coastal (ocean) storms in December. The contrast between warm ocean waters of the east coast and colder air over land areas can produce a great contrast which can lead to storm development.

The exact track of these ocean storms is critical in determining how much snow falls. The exact track depends on if there is phasing (joining together) of the disturbances in the northern & southern Jet streams. If the two disturbances in the jet streams phase the storm can come close enough to give us a significant snow. If the two disturbances do not phase (link up) the coastal storm will track too far south talking its precipitation shield out to sea. Hence we miss getting the storm. It is difficult to say how much phasing occurs with coastal storms this coming winter season.

Be ready for winter storms try and get a generator if you do not have one. Remember when running the generator make sure it is well away from your home. Hurricane season is over we had an active period and a quiet end. Hurricane season ended on November 30. Next month we will recap December weather.

The weather pattern could turn out to be active this winter. The reason we are in a weak El Nino phase. El Nino occurs when the South Pacific Ocean waters are warmer than normal. An El Nino can cause more of a trough in the Jet Stream over the central & eastern US. This trough mixes cold air from Canada and warm air out of the Gulf states. This contrast can cause storms to form. Stay Tuned to next month’s article and be safe!! ◇

# Homelessness Fight is an Opportunity for Dialogue

Joe D’Amore  
HOMELESS COLUMNIST

Recently news reports - and explosive social media message decried Mayor Daniel Rivera, apparent unilateral decisions regarding the use of the Buckley Bus Station as a staging area for feeding homeless people. He ordered that homeless people vacate the station and that a humanitarian group no longer offer dinner and referral services on Wednesday nights. This has perpetuated a flurry of social media posts, largely denouncing the decision. This has also encouraged many advocates for the homeless, largely teenagers related to the group TMF, The Movement Family lead by leader Michael Gorman to hold a candle light vigil in protest.

This painful episode in the evolving story of homelessness in Lawrence continues to reveal the division in the community on how to deal with homelessness in one of the poorest cities in the Commonwealth. Last year, a sprawling “tent city” of over 60 people at the Casey Bridge, adjacent to the Pemberton State Park parking lot was disbanded. Today, only remnants of a thriving homelessness encampment remain punctuated with stern “No Trespassing signs”. The police are under order to enforce these two measures.

The Mayor has advocated for years on several themes. One of them is that it is not humane for people to live under bridges and inside cardboard boxes on park benches and in train stations. Secondly, Lawrence has an impressive network of resources maintained by several non- profit organizations that operate soup kitchens, emergency shelters, transitional and subsidized housing and a vibrant range of community clinic services delivered through outreaches. They can be relied on for addressing homelessness but within limits.

If you are an unsheltered homeless person in Lawrence you will have available hot meals every day in one of three locations, a place to shower at least twice a week and even though very limited opportunities; emergency shelter beds and transitional housing. In addition to the professional state and non-profit services there are numerous advocate groups, faith based organization, grass roots and even individuals like Mr. Gorman that really make an impact in not only stabilizing people who live outdoors, but enabling those willing and able to find pathways to escape the streets and get into “programs”. These range from medical services, mental health counseling, substance abuse counseling, access to affordable housing. Mr. Gorman and is group in just a few short months of operations can claim many success stories.

The situation is that emotions are running very high on all sides but when you take a closer look everyone has a viable point that can be defended. The Mayor must maintain order and public safety and guide the city to solving its homelessness problems through available agencies. This also means that all agencies have a finite level of resources and that therefore surrounding communities should be co-participants in addressing the issue. Individuals, organizations and groups of individuals – whether formal or not- should be given access to deliver food, clothing and hope too to those that most at risk

The problems in Lawrence stem primarily from every city and town that shares a border with it has conditions that make it impossible to be an unsheltered homeless person within its own borders. You cannot live under a bridge, in a car or abandoned building and get away with it for long in just about every municipality in Merrimack



TMF Volunteer Jershawn Brown gives hair cuts to the homeless at the Buckley Garage in Lawrence during TMF family dinner

Valley with the exceptions of Lowell and to a very limited degree in Haverhill. There are municipal ordinances, public policy and police enforcement measures that criminalize homelessness. When this happens those that succumb to whatever has lead them to be homeless; whether physical, psychological, social or financial will literally migrate to communities that will enable them to stay and can avail themselves to helpful resources.

When the Casey Bridge was at full capacity with 60 or so people there were people living there that came from all over New England. Lawrence has a unique problem of maintaining OPEN BORDERS to migrant homeless populations. And when the Mayor complains that other communities should “do their part”, he is implying that the key to solving homelessness is a regionalized approach where every community contributes. Even my little town of Groveland can contribute. Surely, with close to a third of our land mass being woodlands if anybody pitched a tent to live in the natural, they would be promptly removed by police upon discovery. But yet, Groveland, as most communities in Merrimack Valley, has done little to expand affordable housing units –which it is compelled to do by state law--and to achieve 10% affordable housing stock.

Homeless people need homes and even though operating soup kitchens and emergency shelters should not be expected in most communities, there are numerous resources, state grants and zoning guidelines available for communities to start moving the needle towards building the aggregate level of affordable housing for the poorest citizens. If this was done collectively a significant amount of pressure would be removed from communities like Lawrence.

This situation that has occurred and as reported this week in Lawrence is a golden opportunity for both sides at odds with each other to sit down and talk instead of shouting at each other or putting “lines-in-the-sand” through the media. This is especially important when both opposing sides each have very compelling positions. And the Mayor in particular should pick up the phone and call his counterparts in the surrounding cities and towns and initiate a serious effort to discuss how homelessness can be a shared responsibility. Now is the time to expand the conversation and slow the concentrated migration of homeless into a few communities dotted throughout the state.

Joe D’Amore  
Founder, Merrimack Valley Hope Mission ◇

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# Mayor Throws Homeless Out of Buckley Garage

RIVERA SHUTS DOWN TMF DINNERS FOR HOMELESS AS WELL

While most people ignore the homeless and pretend they don't exist, for the past 6 months a volunteer group of teens from Lawrence called "The Movement Family" (TMF) have been serving a family style dinner to the homeless every Wednesday night at the Buckley Garage on Common Street.

The Buckley Garage is also a place where about a dozen homeless people sleep every night ... until now.

Last week, Lawrence Mayor Dan Rivera halted family dinners for the homeless on Wednesday nights, and ordered police to remove the dozen or so homeless people who sleep there every night.

TMF is a volunteer group run by 26-year-old Michael Gorman and is comprised of mainly young Latinos who are at-risk. TMF gets food donations from local restaurants, eateries, and home cooked meals from volunteers.

The group cleans the bus terminal when the dinner is over, leaving it far cleaner than when they arrived.

In the six months that TMF has been serving family dinners, they have served meals to hundreds of homeless people, while also offering them services to help them get out of their situation.

**BLAMING TMF**  
The mayor's move against the homeless came after a worker at the Merrimack Valley Regional Transit Authority (MVRTA) posted photos of garbage and dirty heroin needles at the Buckley Garage on his Facebook page. He did so to protest the conditions he had to work in every day.

Someone showed those photos to Mayor Dan Rivera claiming that they were from the Wednesday night TMF family dinner in order to get them shut down. At first, the Mayor believed the story by the phony "homeless advocate" and ordered cops to shut down the TMF dinners.



The Valley Patriot investigated the matter and sent Mayor Rivera proof that the photos of garbage and dirty needles posted on Facebook were actually taken on a Monday morning – and were not the result of the Wednesday night TMF dinners for the homeless. But, instead of reversing his decision – Rivera doubled down and ordered police to throw the homeless out of the garage and reaffirmed his order to stop TMF from feeding the homeless there one night a week.

Lawrence Mayor Dan Rivera is a Democrat.  
"I'm disappointed that we have been doing this bus station since April, and not once has the Mayor come to see the foundation that we built there," said TMF founder Michael Gorman of North Andover.

"It's more than just a dinner. We had Tewksbury Detox coming weekly to get individuals beds. We had a methadone clinic table, donations table, Narcan table, prayer table etc. This wasn't just a pick up your food and see you next week. We were building a family environment and displaying how important it is to never give up, and to keep the hope alive."

Gorman said that most TMF members come from tough situations at home and having them experience giving back to their community was invaluable to at risk kids in Lawrence.

"This was their escape. They were understanding love, guidance, and acceptance. I guess I'm just disappointed."

He added, "It's not your city Mayor Rivera. It's our city. What happened to working together?"

**MAYOR CLAIMS TMF VIOLATED AGREEMENT**

For his part, Mayor Rivera claims TMF violated an agreement to keep the garage clean but Valley Patriot videos show that the group left the bus station cleaner than when they got there every week.

"In Lawrence, there are at least three locations where people can eat hot meals with dignity every day; Cor Unum Meal Center, Bread & Roses, and Good Shepard Center," the mayor said in a press release after a day of dodging questions from the local media," Rivera said in a written statement.

"We have many shelters for men, women and children, who for many reasons find themselves out in the cold; we welcome any community that wants to provide shelter for folks in the same way to do so. After months of supporting and allowing ad hoc homeless sheltering and feeding, we have decided to disallow



TMF served family style dinners to hundreds of homeless people in the last six months before Mayor Rivera shut them down.

those activities at the Buckley Garage."

"The only requirements we had for those uses [at the Buckley Garage] was that people cleaned up after themselves, did not use drugs at the Buckley, did not defecate or urinate in the building, or interfere with the normal business of the garage. They [TMF] did not live up to their side of the agreement and over time, have created a culture of fear and unsanitary conditions for daily patrons of the garage. Again, this is not about providing services to the homeless- we have organizations in place to do just that. This is about the orderly running of the Buckley garage."

**EDITORS NOTE** - The City of Lawrence has two homeless shelters open year round, Daybreak on Winter Street which is full to capacity with 55 homeless guests every night, and Lazarus House on Holly Street which only accepts families and turns away individuals.

Michael Gorman said he was disappointed that the mayor was blaming his teen age volunteers. "I would have preferred him blaming me if he was going to blame anyone, but these kids took it personal. They think they did something wrong and they are taking it hard that the mayor is blaming them. Not only that, but what the mayor is saying is just not true. If the people who sleep there did something on a day when we aren't there, that's one thing. But, to blame TMF is just not true and it was like a punch in the gut to our kids."

Valley Patriot publisher Tom Duggan has gone live on Facebook to broadcast the Wednesday night dinners each week

showing the conditions of the bus terminal. "I was there every week. I even go back an hour after the dinner is over while I am Live on Facebook to check the conditions of the terminal. All those videos are still on-line. These kids clean the bus station to the point where it is cleaner than when they got there. I don't think it's very fair to blame these kids."

"The real problem here is that there are homeless people who sleep there every night. Some have trashed the place during the rest of the week when TMF isn't even there. Dan is now using their bad behavior as an excuse to shut down TMF family dinner. If the people sleeping there are the problem, how about finding a place for them? Why stop the family dinners once a week?"

Duggan says there is no "culture of fear" during the Wednesday night dinners as Dan Rivera claims.

"Family dinner is one night a week and starts at 9PM, there are no members of the public in fear while waiting for a bus because the buses don't run at 9pm. Dan is purposely blaming TMF for things that happen when TMF is not even there. What's worse is the hypocrisy of the excuses he gives on this," Duggan continued.

"On the one hand, Mayor Rivera supports illegal aliens coming to Lawrence, staying in Lawrence, and has no problem spending "needed resources" on those individuals. He even attends rallies for illegals on May Day on the common. Yet, on the other hand Rivera says he has no interest in helping the homeless because most of the homeless in the city are not actually from Lawrence. You can't have it both ways."

"If Dan Rivera isn't interested in feeding the homeless in Lawrence or helping them make their lives better, that's fine. I just wish he would stop getting in the way of people who are willing to do his job for him at no cost."

Members of TMF addressed the Lawrence City Council a week after Rivera shut them down, asking members of the council to help find a place where they can serve dinners to the homeless.

The City of Lawrence does not spend any money on feeding or housing the homeless. The Daybreak Shelter is funded with private donations and small amounts of state funding. House of Mercy, Cor Unum, Bread and Roses and the Good Shepard Center all operate without any funding from the city. ♦

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# Methuen Exchange Club's Police Officer/Firefighter of the Year

## Firefighter of the Year David Broadhurst

Methuen Firefighter David Broadhurst has been named Firefighter of the Year by the Exchange Club of Methuen. He will be honored at The Methuen Exchange Club's 24th Annual Recognition Dinner and Awards Night on Tuesday, November 13, 2018 at the Merrimack Valley Golf Club, 210 Howe Street, Methuen, MA.

On Saturday, June 2, 2018 on Harmony Lane in Methuen, Broadhurst, along with fellow Firefighters Rick Talbot, Ed Doerr, Matt Coco and Cooper Brown delivered a baby that was breached. The lower half of the baby was already out when Broadhurst arrived on scene about two minutes after a 911 call. He was able to unstick the baby's shoulder and deliver the top half of the baby. The crew suctioned the baby's mouth three times before the baby started to breathe. The baby boy was born at 1:11pm on 6/2/18.

Says Broadhurst, "I've been on the job 23 years and never delivered a baby. This was a really unique situation. It was very tense. When the baby opened his eyes and started to breathe, we all felt relieved. We knew he was alive and the mood changed."

Adds Fire Chief Tim Sheehy, "This was outstanding work by David and our fire-



fighters - from his quick response to the ability to deliver the baby under extremely difficult circumstances. They arrived on scene just two minutes after the 911 call. The family also commented on the manner in which our crew created a calming atmosphere. We are proud of their terrific work and so honored that David has been recognized by the Methuen Exchange Club."

Mom Renee Dupuis and baby Brayden Joseph (6 pounds, 6 ounces, 19 inches) were transported to Lawrence General Hospital. ♦



Methuen Police Chief Joe Solomon, Methuen Police Officers of the Year; Matthew St. Jean and Michael Robidoux with President of the Methuen Exchange Club Linda Buell.

# Police Officers of the Year Michael Robidoux and Matthew St. Jean

This year two officers have earned the Methuen Exchange Club's Police Officer of the Year Award.

At a ceremony held on November 13th at the Merrimack Valley Country Club, Methuen Police Officers Matthew St. Jean and Michael Robidoux were presented with the Police Officer of the Year Award, which they earned as a result of their lifesaving actions responding to a call last spring.

On June 5th, both officers were dispatched to a home on Linton Avenue, where a resident's family reported that a man was choking. Upon arrival, officers found the man unresponsive in a chair in the kitchen, and Officer St. Jean immediately began administering the Heimlich maneuver while Officer Robidoux prepared a breathing assistance device.

The officers' efforts proved successful, as the food stuck in the man's throat became dislodged and he began to breathe on his own. He was subsequently transported to a nearby hospital and recovered fully from the incident.

"The quick and decisive actions of Officers Robidoux and St. Jean likely saved this man's life," Chief Solomon said. "I'm incredibly proud of the contribution they make each time they put on their uniforms, and I'm grateful that their work that day helped prevent a tragedy and allowed a resident to return home to his family."

Officer St. Jean grew up in Lowell and subsequently attended UMass Lowell, where he met his wife, Erin. The two now live in Methuen with their two daughters. He began his law enforcement career in 2013 with the Massachusetts Department of Correction before graduating from the first class at the Methuen Police Academy. He serves the Methuen Police Department as a patrol officer and field training officer.

Officer Robidoux grew up in Methuen and attended Methuen High School before earning an associate's degree from Northern Essex Community College. He has been a reserve officer with the Methuen Police Department since 2015, and graduated from the Methuen Police Academy in February. ♦

# Methuen Schools, City Must Institute Hiring Freeze

By D.J. Deeb  
METHUEN EDUCATION COLUMNIST

Earlier this year (in the February, March, and April 2018 Valley Patriot editions) I outlined many suggestions for cuts in spending for the City of Methuen. Last year, the City filled 13 non-civil service municipal positions, hired 10 new firefighters and 3 reserve firefighters, hired 3 new police officers and 9 reserve officers. There were 23 new hires in FY 2016 and 26 new hires in FY 2017. In addition, the number of current and former employees on the city health insurance plan swelled from 1,544 in FY 2016 to about 1,601 in 2018. Some of these positions were certainly needed given the City's population growth but local government spending is still excessive. I suggested a freeze on all new city positions until spending is brought under control two years ago and I repeat that call today. The School Department has actually reduced the number of positions over last 5 years, excluding grant-funded positions. Unfortunately, the same cannot be said for the rest of the City.

Last year, in FY 2018, the School Department was the only major department in the City to reduce its operating budget. With the increase in enrollments and rising cost of special education services this caused a deficit which then-Superintendent Judy Scannell warned the then-City Council would likely happen. In contrast, the Police Department saw an increase of 3.2 percent (9 percent in FY 2017), the Fire Department received an increase of 1.5 percent (9 percent in FY 2017), and the Department of Public Works (DPW) saw an increase of 5 percent (6.5 percent in FY 2017). City spending increases have averaged 3% annually for the last 10 years. In contrast, the School Department has increased only 2.2% annually over the past 10 years. The School Department has made numerous cuts while the City continues to add positions to the budget and give out huge raises.

Unlike the City, the School Department instituted a hiring freeze on all new positions two years ago. At that time, I suggested a freeze on all new city positions until budget spending is brought under control and I repeat that call today. Last month I sought to expand the hiring freeze on the School Department to all existing positions and contract renewals. My Motion was tabled until the December 10th school committee meeting. I call on my colleagues to support this fiscally responsible move and I also call on the members of the Methuen City Council to follow suit with positions in the City as they become vacant.

The Motion that I brought forward in November reads: To institute a hiring freeze on any and all positions and contract extensions/renewals in the Methuen Public Schools until further notice or except by a vote of the School Committee. I am willing to accept a friendly amendment to this motion to exempt classroom

teachers, but my reason for bringing this forward is that more than 20 positions became vacant in September and October. Most of these positions were administrative or support staff. With the current fiscal crisis this is a perfect time to examine the need for each and every internal position that becomes available without causing anyone to lose their jobs. Every non-teaching position that becomes available in Methuen Public Schools should have to be justified to the entire school committee and the community. The City should be doing the same with any positions that become vacant across the City. Please reach out to the members of the Methuen School Committee and tell them that you support this Motion to institute a complete hiring freeze on non-teaching positions in Methuen Public Schools.

There are plenty of cuts that can be made in the City of Methuen given the current budget crisis. Current city employees have a 62/38 split for their health insurance while retirees enjoy an 80/20 split for the same health insurance. I am certainly not looking to take away benefits promised to our current retirees, but this benefit needs to be changed for future retirees. Retiree health insurance benefits are currently costing the City over \$1 Million annually.

Longevity benefits cost the city hundreds of thousands of dollars each year. Longevity needs to be grandfathered, capped, and negotiated out of future contracts as a benefit for new employees. Many cities and towns in the Commonwealth have already eliminated this costly expense for new hires and Methuen should do the same.

Let's examine the Department of Economic and Community Development: We have a Director who makes \$112,000 per year, an Assistant Director of Planning who makes \$88,000 per year, an Assistant Director of Community Development who makes \$71,000 per year, a Community Development Secretary, a Community Development Confidential Secretary, a Head Clerk, a senior Planner, and an Environmental Planner (Position created in 2017). Do we really need all of these positions? The time has come to look seriously at consolidation.

Now, let's turn to the Police Department. Last year the Police went from 2 captains to 5 captains in addition to the numerous other promotions for a Department that has just 71 patrolmen.

The fact remains that some neighboring communities, including North Andover, do not have police captains. We do not need them either and certainly not at the salaries that they are demanding.

Under the currently-funded MOU the police captains are earning base salaries of \$188,206. This is ridiculous! We could add 3 patrolmen for each captain that is eliminated and we certainly should look at adding more patrolmen to help the City of Methuen address crime rates. As I wrote

FREEZE: PAGE 13

STRAIGHT FROM

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**HEROES AND BOZOS OF 2018**  
While we normally reserve the word “hero” for our brave veterans, police officers, and firefighters, the use of the word hero in this yearly notebook feature “HEROES and BOZOS” is to denote community heroes who go above and beyond to make our lives better.

**BOZO - METHUEN SCHOOL COMMITTEEMAN DJ DEEB**

Talk about an ungrateful jerk. For years, The Valley Patriot has provided controversial Methuen School Committeeman DJ Deeb free space in the pages of this newspaper to share his opinions and perspective. How does he thank me? Last month, Deeb took advantage of the space we gave him in this paper to praise embattled Methuen City Councilor Steve Saba for laying off cops and - surprise - attack me, the very person who has given him a voice and defended his right of free speech. On top of that, the police salaries he talked about in that column were inaccurate and I would argue purposely misleading. There’s an old saying that you don’t crap where you eat, and it’s apparent that Deeb’s mom never taught him that. But, despite recommendations from all three of my editors to pull Deeb’s column last month, I continue to stand with Deeb’s right of free speech even though that speech was deceitful and insulting. I will continue to allow Deeb to do so in the future as well because, that’s what free speech is all about. In a free society you don’t silence people who are ignorant and insulting, you don’t sue them or censor them, you combat their ignorance and insults by using your speech to counter their speech. As such, I am continuing to publish Deeb’s column every month, while also naming DJ Deeb as this year’s BOZO OF 2018.

**HERO MICHAEL GORMAN AND THE KIDS AT TMF**

Michael Gorman (and Sam Salib) and his volunteer group of teenagers from Lawrence called The Movement Family have made it their mission to go out into the community and help homeless people get into detox, get transitional housing, and feed and clothe them. For the last three decades I’ve watched government bodies and nonprofit groups have meetings upon meetings to discuss how to help the homeless in Lawrence but very few of them actually do anything ... except have meetings. Mike Gorman and his crew at TMF are highly deserving of the title of Heroes of 2018. If only we had more people like Mike and the crew at TMF.

**BOZO - METHUEN COUNCILOR STEVE SABA**

There are a lot of reasons Steve Saba has earned our BOZO of the Year award this year. For starters, his constant personal attacks against women at the city council table, his disrespectful comments about

### TOM DUGGAN'S NOTEBOOK



This month marks the first anniversary of the Paying Attention Podcast at the Studio 21 Podcast Cafe, and also marks the 19th anniversary of the Paying Attention Program. We have been on many radio stations over the years and a few TV stations too. Join our studio audience on December 27th for our one year anniversary show at 1pm at 304 South Broadway in Salem, NH. The above photo was from our first podcast, to my right are: Methuen Police Chief Joe Solomon, Boxford Chief James Riter, Haverhill Chief Alan DeNaro, and North Andover Chief Charles Gray who discussed the opioid crisis last December.

police officers, and his dishonest attacks against the police chief, and proposing a measure that will result in the layoff of at least 30 police officers in Methuen at a time when crime is rising in their city. But, Saba actually outdid all of that when he tried to blame Mayor James Jajuga for the police layoffs that are about to occur as the result of his successful proposal to cut \$1.8M out of the police budget while voting to give the school department additional money. This, even though it was the school department which overspent their budget by \$4M this year and \$2M last year, while the police budget was actually balanced. The real shame in all of this is that Saba has pushed me into a position to defend Jajuga (of all people) at a time when Jajuga is trying to have this newspaper shut down.

**HEROES - METHUEN CIY COUNCIL**  
- Given all that has happened in the world of corrupt Methuen politics this year, it’s hard to remember some of the more heroic actions the council took earlier in the year. For the first time in recent memory, the council actually did their jobs when passing the city budget. As painful as it was to watch, this year’s council went line-by-line through every single expenditure in the budget, discussed the need - or lack of need - for each item, and gave the public a trans-

parent look at how the city operates. While I don’t agree with all the cuts they made, the fact that they did what no other council has done in more than a decade was quite heroic, especially since some councilors took a political hit for some of the more contentious issues they discussed.

**BOZOS - METHUEN CITY COUNCIL**

Despite all the good things that came from the Methuen City Council’s budget discussions and some brave votes on personnel issues, at the end of the day the council nearly threw all that good work out the window when they voted to cut \$1.8M out of the police budget (after police had already taken a cut) meaning that as many as 30 cops will have to be laid off within the next few months. What’s more, they only borrowed \$4M from the state to cover the \$4M overspent by Judy Scannell, DJ Deeb and the rest of the Methuen School Committee. Councilor Jessica Finocchiaro warned at the time that as they move forward there may be more hidden cost overruns that they don’t know about, and as such the council should borrow a little more so they won’t run a deficit. Instead of heeding her warnings, the council only borrowed the \$4M they needed to pay for school overruns and wouldn’t you know it? It wasn’t a few months later when the council learned that the receiver

appointed by the state will have to be paid, will have to have expenses paid, and will have to have a budget to audit the Methuen books. SURPRISE! There’s no money in the budget for that. Finocchiaro was right. Now Methuen will be facing even more cuts to city services as they cannot go back to the state and borrow more. What’s worse, more spending measures have been unearthed by way of private contracts that have to be paid, but were never budgeted for. In their defense, this council has done far more work - and good work at that - than any previous council in the last decade. It’s just too bad they couldn’t put aside petty personal politics to finish the year as total heroes. Instead they get a split HERO/BOZO decision.

**BOZOS METHUEN SCHOOL COMMITTEE & METHUEN VOTERS**

Seriously.... if you can’t count on your local school committee to do basic things like make sure your superintendent is certified and licensed to run your school system, then what the hell are they good for? After learning that (now) former Superintendent Judy Scannell was never certified and never licensed to be a superintendent, the Methuen School Committee decided to allow Scannell to retire with a full pension and never called for any public investigation into how this woman, with no certifications or license, actually became superintendent in the first place. The school committee swept everything under the rug, no public hearing, no public investigation, no transparency. Just accept her retirement and pretend the whole thing never happened. As such, the public will never learn to know that Judy Scannell was a fraud when she was hired. We will never find out who knew about it on the search committee, who knew after she was appointed and who, if anyone, used Scannell’s secret against her to get political favors from Judy Scannell while she was pretending to be the superintendent of schools for 10 years.

They also never held anyone accountable for the fact that Judy Scannell was a school principal prior to being appointed superintendent, and she wasn’t certified or licensed to be a school principal back then either. WOW! A total cover-up brought to light by brave journalists like Tim Wood at Loop Weekly and yet after it was all out in the open, nobody did a damn thing about it. Shame on the Methuen School Committee, and shame on the people of Methuen for not demanding accountability from their elected officials. To this very minute, the school committee has completely moved on and has no interest in investigating what really happened here. Maybe that’s because they know the voters of Methuen (like themselves) are totally incompetent and just don’t care. Or maybe it has to do with

CONTINUED UNDER FREDDIE



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all those Methuen politicians having family members working in the school system.

**HEROES - METHUEN SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEMBERS JANA DINATALE AND JANA PESCE**

When the vote came to accept superintendent Judy Scannell's retirement both Methuen School Committee members Jana DiNatale and Jane Pesce refused to vote YES because they wanted an investigation into how this happened and a public hearing to have more transparency. They preferred Scannell be fired so the public would see in a public hearing what actually happened and who was responsible. While the rest of the committee wanted to cover everything up and move on, DiNatale and Pesce stood their ground.

**HERO - NORTH ANDOVER SELECT-MAN PHIL DECOLOGERO**

It's hard to find an elected official in the Merrimack Valley who is as proactive and involved in the community than North Andover Selectman Phil DeCologero. Other officials show up at a meeting every two weeks and then don't really do anything in between. But, DeCologero helps to organize the NAMA Farmer's Market, Fall Festival, Sheep Shearing, and several other great civic events in town. What's more, if not for DeCologero making phone calls during Hanukkah to find out why there was no menorah lighting ceremony on the common this year, it never would have happened. DeCologero understands that being a public official means being involved in the community a little more than showing up at a meeting and pretending to be important. As my regular readers know, I have contempt for people who talk a good game but don't actually do anything and I LOVE people who are do-ers and never take credit for the things they do. THANK YOU Phil for being a doer and not a talker like most of the other blow hard elected officials who only care about photo ops and having meetings.

**HEROES CARRIE WEILAND AND ROGER FARRAH**

With zero money from the City of Lawrence, zero money from state government, and zero money from the federal government, Roger Farrah and Carrie Weiland run House of Mercy on Bay State Road in Lawrence. During the day, House of Mercy allows homeless people to come in and take a shower, wash their clothes, get

a free meal, a haircut, counseling services for drug addiction and mental health, and helps them get into transitional housing. Roger Farrah and Carrie Weiland spend their own money and take in very little in donations to help the homeless and they do so without getting any credit or accolades for their hard work. Roger and Carrie are truly community heroes and if you have clothing or items to donate for the homeless this is a great place to give!

**BOZO - HAVERHILL MAYOR JIM FIORENTINI**

He can claim all he wants that crime is down in Haverhill and that he has single handedly saved the world but Mayor Jim Fiorentini conceals police scanner calls from the public while he pretends to care about transparency. As far as we know, Haverhill is the only municipality in Massachusetts that does not broadcast their police scanner calls to the public. What do you have to hide Jimmy? Certainly you don't want us to take your WORD that crime is down in Haverhill when the public has no way of following police radio calls themselves to see if that's true or not. I always chuckle when an elected official like Jim Fiorentini pats themselves on the back and talks about transparency in government all the while working overtime to conceal information from the public. It's a BOZO move that the people of Haverhill should not tolerate, but like the Methuen School Committee issue, he gets away with it because the public doesn't demand accountability. We certainly do get the government we deserve. A big BOZO to Fiorentini and the people of Haverhill.

**BOZO - STATE REP. ANDY VARGAS**

I was hoping to be able to put Haverhill State Rep. Andy Vargas on the hero list this year after chatting with him on election night about the lack of transparency on the police scanner issue. I had him pegged as a civil libertarian who cared about transparency in government, but since our conversation the first week of November, Vargas has done nothing about Jim Fiorentini concealing police calls from the public. Let's get something straight, police officers are public officials. They do their business in public because their business is OUR business. If State Rep. Vargas really believes all the negative things his party says about cops being racist and that cops need civilian oversight, then why is it that he is not on the forefront of an effort to stop Fiorentini from concealing regular radio police calls from the public? Last year Vargas got a big BOZO for warning the public (which inevitably includes drug dealers and gang members) of an impending ICE raid in Haverhill. Maybe he will find religion in 2019 and actually do something about this kind of secrecy in government and earn his way onto the hero list. But as of right now Andy stands firm on the BOZO list.

**BOZOS DEMOCRATS IN 3rd DISTRICT**

With the retirement of 3rd District Congressman Niki Tsongas the democrats in the 3rd district had a chance to walk the walk like the voters of Boston did this year when they threw out rich, white liberal Mike Capuano and elected a black female in Ayanna Pressley. Among the candidates to replace Tsongas were a gay man married to another man, a transgendered former marine, a millennial Latina from Lawrence, a rich white woman and a rich white man from Andover. If the democrats in the 3rd district (which includes Lawrence, Lowell, Methuen and Haverhill) really believed in affirmative action and minority representation then why were the top two vote getters rich, white people? In the end, the rich white woman Laurie Trahan beat the rich white guy from Andover Dan Koh in the primary. While I don't agree with proportional representation or electing someone based on race or sexual preference, I have to give a BIG BOZO to the democrats in the third district who

LETTER WRITER REMEMBERS ERIN COX  
CONTROVERSY IN NORTH ANDOVER

To the Editor:

This might be a little random but I was reminiscing with a friend on the Erin Cox scandal at North Andover High School in 2013 when she claimed to be punished for picking a friend up from a party. Since I am from North Andover I followed the story much more closely than the national audience who was exposed to it and I know the truth about what happened. Your newspaper was the only one to report it accurately and got publicly shamed for it which is awful, especially in the age of fake news. 95% of the people who casually heard about this story likely still think she's innocent and it's frightening that that could happen with any news story today. Your reporting on that scandal helped me to think more critically when reading media reports and be a little hesitant to jump on board with easy narratives that lack

pretend they do, until it comes to their own congressman.

**BOZO - SID HARRIS of METHUEN**

Poor Sid. Desperate to be relevant with a pathetic need to be part of the IN crowd of Methuen politics, Sid Harris has become one of the biggest BOZOS in the valley. After coming in last in his bid for city council last year, Sid has become a puppet for political insiders who use him to do their bidding while they hide behind anonymity. We used to call people like that "useful idiots" when I was growing up, but this year I will just settle for BOZO SID.

**HERO - CARINA PAPPALARDO**

It's not an easy task to run the Daybreak Homeless Shelter in Lawrence with no help from the city, no help from the federal government, and only pennies coming in from the state. But, somehow Carina Pappalardo from the Lawrence Psychological Center (which oversees Daybreak) manages to get it done. Throughout the year, Pappalardo holds private fundraisers to help keep the homeless shelter operational. A homeless shelter that fills 55 beds every night, in a city with more than 250 homeless people out on the streets. She needs a new building, the city doesn't care. The state and federal government also do not care. So, Carina is doing everything she can to try and get a new facility with no help from our local, state, and federal elected officials. The very same officials by the way, who campaign on the backs of the poor as democrats who care about the downtrodden. Thank you Carina Pappalardo for being a community HERO with almost no help from the blowhards who run for office.

**BOZOS - CNN "REPORTERS"**

To be a CNN loyal viewer who believes that they "report" the "news" you first have to be able to completely forget everything else they just reported a few minutes earlier. In one CNN segment they call Donald Trump a right wing "Nazi" and then hold panel discussions with liberal guests who take turns painting Trump as a hater who wants to exterminate Jews. But, wait... in segment number two Donald Trump is "reported" as a left wing communist spy for Russia, complete with panel discussions on how Trump is a secret operative for Vladimir Putin. But, wait ... in segment #3 CNN wants you to know that there was another school shooting and the only way to stop these shootings is for you to turn in all your guns to ... Donald Trump. That's right kids, Trump is an evil left wing communist, while also being a right wing Nazi and by the way ... give that Commie/Nazi all your guns and everyone will be safer. The fake reporters at CNN have to be the biggest BOZOS in the country ... that is... right next to the idiots who watch CNN

facts. For that I'd like to thank you and wish you luck in future reporting. I may be 5 years late on this thank you, but I hope you know that you did the right thing in the face of adversity and I will forever be a fan of the Valley Patriot.

By all means feel free to use my email however you see fit. I imagine being a journalist with integrity is a tough job and that's a shame to hear about the complaints but your job is essential to having an informed public and honest society. Policemen and firefighters and similar jobs rightfully get the respect for their bravery and while its not quite an "apples to apples" comparison, there is a real sense of bravery in following and reporting facts that may not be appreciated by the public. I'm happy to hear that my email had a positive influence, keep doing your thing!

Michael Staropoli

believing that what they are watching is actually "news".

**BOZOS - OPPONENTS OF MARIJUANA FACILITY IN N. ANDOVER**

This year North Andover voters turned down the cash cow proposal of a marijuana facility on Rt. 125. It would have been one thing if the debate at town meeting was an honest open discussion about the pros and cons of a marijuana facility in town. Instead it turned into a dishonest and deceptive propaganda campaign, complete with a doctor showing brain scans of kids who had smoked marijuana, a mail campaign objecting to the evils of smoking marijuana and a social media campaign that purposefully confused voters into thinking this was a referendum on pot legalization, when in fact pot had already been legalized at that point. In the end the voters at town meeting made an emotional decision and were swayed by the opponents of the facility.

**HEROES - EUNICE ZEIGLER AND THE METHUEN DAY COMMITTEE**

Methuen City Councilor Eunice Zeigler came up with a great idea to hold a Methuen Day celebration for kids and their families in Methuen this year. She and fellow Councilors Finocchiaro, Hamilton, and the rest of the Methuen Day committee did a great job organizing this first ever event. Because of their hard work and dedication Methuen had a great festival everyone could be proud of. That is, despite the fact that two supporters of Steve Saba tried to make the event very political. SEE BELOW

**BOZOS - DUNK TANK PROTESTERS**

While Councilors Zeigler, Finocchiaro, and Hamilton were working with the Methuen Day committee to organize a great event for Methuen families, at least two troublemakers tried to politicize the event over comments I made about Steve Saba's vote to cut police officers. They interfered with the planning of the event by threatening organizers with a public boycott because that evil Valley Patriot publisher Tom Duggan was going to be in the dunk tank for charity. Yeah... my words are soooooo powerful that these two clowns wanted to shut down the Methuen Day event over comments I made on my TV show - not about Methuen Day - but about Councilor Saba's vote to cut cops. When that didn't work, they threatened to picket the event if the evil Tom Duggan was allowed to participate. After all, evil Duggan said mean things about their political puppet master - Councilor Saba. How could they possibly let the families of Methuen enjoy a political-free day in the community with such treachery going on? In the end, the two troublemakers boycotted Methuen Day even though the person



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# Violent Crime Plummets in Lawrence

## THE CALM BEFORE THE STORM OR A NEW NORMAL IN LAWRENCE?

It isn't a sexy story, so you probably won't read about it in the local daily newspaper, but violent crime in Lawrence is plummeting and the results are quite noticeable.

Lawrence has a new Police Chief Roy Vasque who certainly can take credit for much of Lawrence's declining crime rate. Others point to the fact that federal law enforcement has drained the swamp and arrested and deported major drug and gun traffickers headquartered in the city.

Chief Vasque credited his officers and a new approach to police visibility.

"We have a lot of new, young, aggressive officers that are doing a great job initiating enforcement and being visible as a deterrent to crime. More officers walking, and on bikes, has increased our visibility as well."

"The new gang unit and our continued partnership with the state police and the Essex County Sheriff's Department has kept the pressure up on the gangs."

Vasque said on the Paying Attention Podcast in July that regardless of the actual crime numbers "our clearance numbers are really glaring. Sometimes we are triple the national average."

Lawrence Mayor Dan Rivera told

The Valley Patriot that he credits Chief Vasque and the new officers he hired.

"Lawrence won't be safe until people in every neighborhood feel safe. That being said, the sheer number of police we have added, plus the police department's leadership and community policing focus, led by Chief Vasque, have taken a significant cut out of the crime that occurs in the city."

The Valley Patriot has obtained the crime numbers for 2018 (as of mid-November), and compared to the previous years, the numbers are staggering.

Last year the City of Lawrence had 12 murders. As of the time we went to print (December 11th) there were only four murders in Lawrence for the year thus far.

Rapes have been on the rise since 2013 in Lawrence when they city logged 19 rapes.

In 2014 and 2015 there were 26 rapes. In 2016 there were 30 rapes. In 2017 there were 32.

But the number of rapes reported in Lawrence this year is only 24, for a decline for the first time, since 2012.

Robberies in Lawrence are down 56% in 2018 (61 robberies) compared to last

year.

Residential burglaries declined by 45% and are down to 74 this year. Commercial burglaries were reduced from last year's 72 commercial burglaries to this year's 44 commercial burglaries.

Larcenies were reduced by 69% in Lawrence this year to a low of 119 this year.

While Lawrence was once the auto theft capital of the country, this year auto thefts are down 45% from 407 last year to 201 this year.

The only uptick in crime in the City of Lawrence in 2018 is Aggravated Domestic Assault.

Domestic Assaults rose slightly last year from 152 in 2017 to 155 so far this year.

"I think that the department is energized right now," Vasque said on Paying Attention. "it's up to me to make sure that that happens and I think if you have energized guys who want to go out to the job to get the results, I think that reflects in the numbers."

"Certainly we reorganized the department, took a look at everybody, we put more bodies on the street going from 3 to 9 community police officers, as an exam-



ple. We are trying to get guys to buy into a certain area and work that area and talk to the residents. We assigned one officer to be a liaison with the business community. They are spending the money here, they're trying to open businesses and we want them to have a voice."

"I think right now the guys are feeling really good about what's going on, we are definitely moving forward with a lot of new technology, with cameras and we are looking to add a canine unit to help the city. Those canines are a huge tool and we miss them in Lawrence."

## NOTEBOOK FROM PAGE 9

they were supposedly defending – Councilor Saba – was seen enjoying Methuen Day with his family. That's right, Steve Saba himself didn't boycott the event. You can't make it up. As a side note, I am flattered that some people think I'm so important that it would consume so much of their time and energy. What makes them BOZOS most of all though, is that these two made life difficult for the good people who were trying to organize Methuen Day and do something positive for the community. I hope they learned their lesson. But, in case they didn't I will spell it out. You are not as important and influential as you think you are, and the relationships that I have built in this community over the last 5 decades are a little stronger than the one or two years you two have been on the scene ... BOZOS.

BOZOS COLUMBIA GAS – Seriously, I don't think I need to explain why.

HERO – GEOFF DIEHL

Even though he knew that Lawrence was going to vote against him 9-1, (as they do against all Republicans) U.S. Senate Candidate Geoff Diehl spent an inordinate amount of time helping victims of the Columbia Gas disaster. While fires were still raging, Diehl took off his campaign buttons and started handing out water and supplies to those evacuating. In the days that followed, Diehl came back to Lawrence several times, giving out space heaters, portable showers, food and water.

His opponent Elizabeth Warren whisked into the city for a quick photo op and then disappeared until three months later when she returned for another photo op. THANK YOU Geoff Diehl for putting the people of Lawrence above your campaign even though the people of Lawrence preferred to vote for the woman who did nothing for them.

HEROES METHUEN EXCHANGE – The good people of the Methuen Exchange get very little credit for the good deeds they do. The Methuen Exchange helps the kids at the St. Anne's Home by taking them to ball games, miniature golf, gives scholarships to local students, gives awards to police officers, firefighters and veterans, gives away turkey dinners to needy families at Thanksgiving, gives away toys to needy children at Christmas and throughout the year do countless good deeds for people in the community.

HERO MARC LAPLANT – Like Eunice Zeigler in Methuen and Phil DeCologero in North Andover, Marc LaPlant in Lawrence is a doer. He has spent countless hours honoring WWI veterans in Lawrence and always seems to be about honoring others. Marc and I may not agree on local political issues but Marc has his heart in the right place and he walks the walk. During the Columbia Gas disaster and its aftermath, Marc and his wife Sue were the driving force of helping people in the Colonial Heights neighborhood. While I wish he

moved things along a little faster, he also helped our friend C. Bryan Thomas get a concession stand for the South Lawrence East Little league.

2 YEARS LATER, WHAT WE KNOW AND DON'T KNOW ABOUT THE ACCUSATIONS AGAINST TRUMP

As we approach the half-way point of President Trump's four-year term, it's important to point out that there is still not one shred of evidence that President Donald Trump committed a crime concerning "hacking an election" in collusion with Russia. Lots of people connected to the Trump campaign have been indicted for alleged crimes that have nothing to do with the campaign, and nothing to do with "hacking an election".

Here's what we know so far:

Hillary Clinton colluded with the Russians to create a fake dossier on Trump that the FBI then used to leak to the press.

The FBI then took those press accounts (generated by them) to a federal court as evidence that Trump was a secret Russian spy who was going to turn over our military to Vladimir Putin the minute he became president.

The federal court FISA judge approved a warrant so that the Obama Justice Department could spy on the presidential campaign of Donald Trump, but the judge was never told that the fake dossier used to get that warrant was paid for by Clinton and generated by the Russians.

Robert Mueller interviewed with Donald Trump to replace the fired James Comey

as FBI director and was rejected by Trump the DAY before he was appointed to be the guy to investigate Trump.

It seems to me that there's tons of evidence of Russian collusion, conflicts of interest, and corruption by the democrats, the Obama administration and Hillary Clinton's campaign, and ZERO evidence of Trump colluding with Russia to "hack an election."

It's weird that the so called news media tries to paint the opposite as a reality while they cry and whine about Russians "meddling in the 2016 election".

SOME ELECTION MEDDLING IS OK

With democrats and their propagandists on CNN clutching their pearls every day over the fantasy that citizens of Russia "meddled in the 2016 election" they don't seem to have any problem with the fact that illegal aliens, (citizens of South and Central America) are actually VOTING in our elections. So, if you are keeping score at home, Russians meddling in American elections is BAD. But if they are illegal aliens, it's perfectly ok. My only question for the Trump hating democrats obsessed with Russia meddling is this: what if we find out that there actually was Russian meddling in the 2016 election but that they were Russians who were illegal aliens living in this country? Would that be ok? Reason #5,453 why I could never be a democrat today. Everything they believe in is in direct conflict with everything else they believe. ♦

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# Christmas Wishes for Better Days in Dracut

**Brian Genest**  
VALLEY PATRIOT DRACUT COLUMNIST

What a year it's been in Dracut! Here's a look back at 2018 with some heart-felt holiday wishes for the coming year...

For Dracut voters, I wish town elections would focus on the important issues. Our town keeps living up to its naughty reputation for the putrid politics of personal destruction. The race for the Board of Selectmen this year was no exception, sadly.

Just like three years ago, Selectman Joe DiRocco had to beat back election-season attacks that had nothing to do with town issues from the nothing-to-offer negative voices who were pushing his opponent, Phil Thibault. (The third candidate, John Joyce, was also under fire non-stop from the moment he pulled papers to run for the seat.)

Just like three years ago, Joe DiRocco defeated Phil Thibault, who has now lost five town elections, in case you've lost count. A Festivus miracle wasn't in the cards again this year, apparently.

Whatever the season, when it comes to politics in Dracut, civility is the Ghost of Christmas Past. The ugly underbelly of town politics is the exact reason good people don't run for office. Or open a business here. Or want to get involved at all.

Speaking of the political underbelly, for the Dracut Connection, I wish the "show" would fade to black, permanently. Let's keep Charlie Brown and Rudolph on the air and take these silly elves off.

For town taxpayers, I wish Town Manager Jim Duggan would start budgeting for capital expenses in the town's nearly \$80 million annual budget, instead of

pushing Proposition 2 ½ overrides and debt exclusions that are continuing to drive up property taxes.

Every two or three years lately, Dracut property owners have to go through this special-election-to-raise-taxes crap. Think of it as the local version of "How the Grinch Stole Christmas." You're little Cindy Lou Who. But Jim Duggan isn't going to change his mind and give you back your money.

This was the third time in six years that Dracut property owners were asked to raise our own taxes. In 2013, a whopping 72% of voters said "no" to two Prop 2 ½ overrides — \$2.9 million for schools and \$200,000 for police, fire and public works. In 2016, voters again rejected two Proposition 2 ½ overrides — \$560,000 for additional police officers and firefighters and \$550,000 to install wireless technology in the elementary and middle schools.

This year, a \$4 million debt exclusion for a fire station in Collinsville and a \$950,000 debt exclusion for security in Dracut Public Schools were passed. Plus, residents are already paying additional taxes above the limits set by Prop 2 1/2 as a result of debt exclusions that were previously passed for the library, police station and \$60 million high school.

The fact that Dracut needs a new fire station in Collinsville shouldn't be a surprise to anyone with eyesight. What should be surprising and alarming is the lack of capital planning in recent years to ensure projects like fire stations happen within the budget, instead of through additional tax increases. Capital planning has melted away like Frosty the Snowman.

There's no place like home for the

DRACUT: PAGE 22



PHOTOS/TOM DUGGAN

## Lawrence Police Arrest Two Men in Salem Street Shooting Nov. 18th

Two people were shot sitting in a car on Salem Street in Lawrence early Sunday evening, November 18th .

Police were called to the scene near the intersection of Salem and Loring Street for a call of shots fired to find one victim shot in the lower extremities.

The victim was taken to the hospital where police were told another victim had showed up shortly after the shooting.

Police found at least three shell casings and a magazine at the scene.

Before State and Lawrence police cleared the scene at Salem Street, another

call of shots fired came in on Hall and Park Streets. Police did not find any shell casings at the scene but a victim called police during the investigation saying he had been shot or shot at outside a bodega at the corner of Elm and Newbury.

Two weeks later on November 26th, Lawrence Police arrested Luis Roman, age 18 of Lawrence and Christopher Perez age 21 of Lawrence. They were charged with armed assault with intent to murder and armed robbery in connection with the shooting.

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PRIOR-YEAR APPLICANTS: You should receive a LIHEAP application in the mail. Follow the instructions to complete the application and return it to GLCAC's LIHEAP as soon as possible.



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## FREEZE: FROM PAGE 6

about last month, Councilor Steve Saba proposed a reorganization that would have eliminated the captain positions and maintained a necessary number of police patrolmen to keep our streets and City safe. Unfortunately, a majority of the City Council (excluding Councilors Jen Kanan and Lynn Vidler who recused themselves from the votes due to family conflicts) have been complacent in supporting the Memorandum of Understanding [MOU] that has resulted in 24% and 18% raises for five Methuen Police captains while resulting in a \$1.8 Million deficit for the Methuen Police Department. The Council voted 5-2 against reorganizing the Police Department and eliminating the captains. This was disgraceful and fiscally irresponsible.

Once again, please contact members of the Methuen School Committee and tell them that you support my Motion to institute a complete hiring freeze on non-teaching positions in Methuen Public

Schools. Also, be sure to let members of the City Council know that they should be doing the same in the City.

On another note, I want to wish all of my readers in the community a very Merry Christmas and Happy New Year in the weeks to come. Happy Holidays!

*D.J. Deeb is a Methuen resident and Secretary of the Methuen School Committee. Deeb is an Adjunct Professor of History/Government at Bunker Hill Community College and an Adjunct*

*Political Science Instructor at the University of Massachusetts Lowell. Deeb also serves as Social Studies Department Chair at Notre Dame High School in Lawrence, Massachusetts. He is the author of Israel, Palestine, and the Quest for Middle East Peace (University Press, 2013) and The Collapse of Middle East Peace (IUniverse, 2003).* ♦



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# An Open Letter to the Victims of the Columbia Gas Explosions and Fires:

The Napoli Shkolnik law firm is proud to be working with the citizens of Massachusetts that have recently suffered damages as a result of the Columbia gas fires and explosions. On Friday, September 28, Napoli Shkolnik, David Raimondo and Associates and the Cunha Law Firm commenced two separate legal actions against Columbia Gas and its parent company.

The first action was filed as a class action and seeks to recover business losses for local businesses harmed by the gas outage and the fires. The class, if certified by a judge, seeks to include all businesses that have lost earnings or revenue as a result of Columbia Gas and its negligent conduct.

The second action was filed on behalf of Dean and Mona Thornhill and their family. The Thornhill’s family home in North Andover was severely damaged by fire and smoke. This case seeks to recover damages for the Thornhill Family including property damage , out of pocket expenses , mental anguish damages.

Our firms stand ready to assist any of the residents or businesses of Andover, North Andover or Lawrence. Our hearts, thoughts and prayers go out to the many victims of this disaster. We call upon Columbia Gas to fairly compensate all of the victims as quickly as possible.

Patrick Haines  
David Raimondo  
Brian Cunha

## Una carta abierta para las víctimas de las explosiones y los fuegos de Columbia Gas:

La Firma de Abogados Napoli Shkolnik se enorgullece por trabajar con los ciudadanos de Massachusetts que recientemente han sufridos daños como resultado de los fuegos y de las explosiones causadas por Columbia Gas. El pasado viernes, 28 de septiembre, Napoli Shkolnik, David Raimondo y Asociados y la Firma de Abogados Cunha Law Firm comenzaron dos acciones legales en contra de Columbia Gas y su empresa matriz.

La primera acción legal fue presentada como un pleito de clase y espera recuperar pérdidas comerciales para negocios locales afectados por la falta de disponibilidad de gas y por los fuegos. Si la clase es certificada por un juez, se espera incluir a todos los negocios que hayan perdido ingresos o ganancias como resultado de la negligencia incurrida por Columbia Gas.

La segunda acción fue presentada en representación de Dean, Mona Thornhill y su familia. El hogar de la familia Thornhill localizado en North Andover fue severamente afectado por el fuego y el humo. Este caso pretende recuperar los daños causados a la familia Thornhill en su propiedad, por gastos no presupuestados y por angustias mentales.

Nuestras firmas se encuentran listas para asistir a cualquier residente o negocio de Andover, North Andover y Lawrence. Nuestros pensamientos y oraciones están con todas las víctimas de este desastre. Solicitamos a Columbia Gas para la compensación justa y lo más rápida posible para todas las víctimas afectadas.

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Methuen Police Officer Randy Haggar and Brian Firth from the Methuen Exchange Club, helped give away free turkey dinner to needy families on Thanksgiving!



Ever wonder where Valley Patriot publisher Tom Duggan gets all those care packages he gives away to the homeless in Lawrence? A group of volunteers called “Someone Cares” run by Deb Carberry of Lawrence get together once a year and create an assembly line to put gloves, hats, hand warmers, snacks and toiletries in a care package bag. So, when people thank Tom for giving out care packages and he says, “Don’t thank ME, I’m just the delivery guy,” he really means it.



The USA Tap Team was a big hit at the North Andover Santa Parade earlier this month.



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# North Andover Resident Finds Columbia Gas Worker Scrawled “N” Word on Her Basement Pipes

North Andover resident Rachel Moffat says she was “horrificed” last month to find that workers for Columbia Gas wrote an ethnic slur (the “N” word) on one of the pipes installed in her basement.

“I noticed it on October 20th” she told the Valley Patriot in an exclusive interview.

“I had initially gone to the area of my basement to take a video of a gas leak that was detected by a Columbia Gas contractor because on Friday the 19th the day before, they detected a gas leak and I insisted that they take me down there to see.”

“I took a video, told them to show me where the leak was that day. The man showed me where it was and I took a video of that, you can hear him on the video saying ‘See it’s bubbling’.”

Moffat says that’s when she noticed the “N” word scrawled on one of the piped installed by Columbia Gas or one of their contractors.

“The next morning I went down to the basement to show them again where gas leak was and I wanted them to see that it’s right under my living room. I was concentrating on seeing the gas leak. I didn’t notice the writing on the pipe at first, but when I looked at the video afterwards I noticed it. I can’t believe they would leave that in my home knowing I was making a video of the gas leak in the basement.”

Moffat says she then checked the video she had made the day before when the Columbia Gas worker was there and says she had unknowingly captured the “N” word on her pipes.

“You can see that they actually wrote that word on my pipes the day before when we looked at the video the day before. It really upset me. They knew I was videotaping, they knew all eyes were on that area why would they do that?”

“It also really upset my mother too, I had to leave work and come home because she was so upset. I had a bunch of workers here and I made them all leave, she was so upset.”

Moffat says she finally called to complain and everyone she talked to at Columbia Gas blamed someone else for the incident.

“They never once said they were sorry. They tried to blame plumbers, the demo crew, it was a different story every time I talked to them. As far as I’m concerned they are all representing Columbia Gas at this point. They are all contracting through them. All these people are subcontractors.”

“My mother grew up in a horrible time of racism in this country and she was mortified that people were treated like that in the past. To think someone would write that on my home is horrifying. She still doesn’t understand this.”

“I’m still upset, still shocked, I’m beside myself. I work for the Commonwealth of Massachusetts and we go through 16 hours of diversity training. I couldn’t believe what I saw, your home is the one place that is your kingdom, and they just come and go as they please. They have taken control of my life. I don’t know how these people are vetted or even if they are vetted at all. I have had over 2 dozen men in my home. They come in, they know I’m alone, they know I’m single. I don’t know who any of these people are invading my privacy.”

“Nobody is watching them. It’s like, where is everyone? Where are the bosses? Where are the politicians who are governing these people? Who are making the decisions? Where are the people in charge?”

### STRING OF BLUNDERS

Moffat says her problems started before the gas explosions this year, citing that Columbia Gas had installed new pipes on her street last year and she believes the gas leak from that pipe installation made her sick.

“The leak was right under my living room. ... Every time I call to say ‘I smell gas’ they kept blowing me off. Moffat says she started getting sick last fall right after they put in the new gas line and went to the doctors.

Since the gas explosions this year,

Moffat says that she no longer sleeps in her bed and is terrified something is going to happen now that her gas has been turned back on.

“I work 2 jobs and I can’t even sleep in my bed anymore ever since the gas came back on. I sleep in my recliner near the door because I’m afraid something is going to go wrong again. I have nightmares almost every night. I was poisoned, I was inhaling noxious fumes.”

### SUING COLUMBIA GAS

Patrick Haines, a partner at Napoli Shkolnik who is representing Moffat said he hears stories like this all the time from those affected by the Columbia Gas disaster but has never seen anything like the N word being scrawled on someone’s basement before.

“This is just an example of what we are seeing in the community,” Haines said.

“This is one story out of a thousand. When we talk to people over and over in the three communities affected, the stories are harrowing. It’s lack of supervision on this case. There’s nobody on the scene from Columbia Gas to control the work being done and supervise the people doing it. There seems to be no accountability for what’s going on. There seems to be no plan or coordination when talking about Columbia Gas and how they are working with these crews. They are just doing the work unsupervised, where is the Columbia Gas people who are supposed to be watching these guys? That’s why we are seeing so much inconsistency in service restoration where some people are getting taken care of and others are not because there’s no supervision.”

Moffat says that if Columbia Gas had been willing to reimburse for everything they said they were going to reimburse her for she wouldn’t even be talking to a lawyer. Now, she is suing the company.

“They are not reimbursing us for the countless hours of time we spend running around doing things that inconvenience us from this change to our whole lifestyle. They aren’t willing to compensate us for the mental exhaustion and going out of



our way to try and keep our work and home routines while also running around trying to deal with all of this,” Moffat said.

The Valley Patriot reached out to Stephen Bryant, the president and COO of Columbia Gas of MA in an email .

We did receive an email from Columbia Gas spokesman Dean Lieberman, his email reads as follows:

“We are deeply disturbed by this situation. This type of behavior is unacceptable, highly offensive and violates our Code of Business Conduct, which all company employees and contractors must abide by. Once we were alerted to this situation, we reached out to the homeowner and personally apologized. We are a company made up of a diverse work force and committed to upholding values that respect diversity in our company and the communities we serve. While we know the crews that were in the house at the time, we were not able to identify the individual(s) responsible. We continue to reinforce our Code of Business Conduct with our employees and contractors.”

~ Dean Lieberman, Columbia Gas spokesman ◇

## POLITICS: FROM PAGE 2

Dixiecrats attacking innocent, non-violent protestors in the 1960s with attack dogs, fire hoses and clubs.

Even when we review recent history, Reagan signed the MLK national holiday into law. Bush, Sr. nominated Clarence Thomas to the Supreme Court and Bush, Jr. nominated Colin Powell and Condoleezza Rice to serve as Secretary of State, the first African-American and the first African-American female, respectively, to do so. But somehow, somewhere the GOP’s civil rights agenda got derailed. Don’t hold your breath in locating an answer as to when and where that derailment occurred.

Other social media warriors would have us believe that the Trump administration is

the modern equivalent of Nazi Germany. They either toss out repeated F-Bombs in their posts, because that is the way to win any argument. Or they carelessly invoke the Nazi label. I honestly wish that people would shamelessly stop using the term Nazi to describe any side, whether it is coming from Rush Limbaugh or MSNBC. We really need to ensure that people know the unspeakable horrors of Hitler and his regime: -- six millions Jews were exterminated; tens of millions of civilians perished; and millions more troops were killed in action. How people can make the giant illogical leap from Hitler to Trump is disingenuous and downright morally suspect. The only president who authorized

the transportation of Americans to internment camps was FDR-- with Japanese-Americans during WWII. To this very day, that executive action represents one of our darkest moments in the complete denial of due process and civil liberties. And as I briefly highlighted in a previous column, Trump has the strongest pro-Israel record of any modern president since Truman. Trump has relocated the US Embassy to Jerusalem, frozen the assets of Iran (a nation that directly funds terrorist operations against Israel), cut back funding on Palestinians who launch rockets and send suicide bombers into Israel, and voiced strong opposition to blatant anti-Semitism and the BDS movement at the United Nations. He also deported an illegal alien back to Germany, who allegedly served as a prison guard during the height of Nazi Germany atrocities. Again, I am not finding exactly where the Nazi label fits in here.

So, in conclusion, what exactly is the core values of this so-called resistance focused on in addition to apparent and deliberate race baiting and historical fallacies? It could be the #MeToo movement, which is very important as a vehicle to root out sex-

ual violence in all walks of life. But what is equally crucial is that false allegations are not allowed to serve as the social media equivalent of a kangaroo court or a communist show trial. Or a reemergence of the political witch hunts of the past—a twisted form of sexual McCarthyism—where unproven and unverifiable accusations become a permanent mark on a person’s identity. Or unfairly destroy an individual’s livelihood or reputation. Campuses across the country have become ground zero for this form of guilt until proven innocent mantra. What is remarkable about this country is that we have evolved over the centuries to expand voting rights, broaden personal liberties, encourage economic opportunity and preserve the pillars of free speech. But that free speech comes with a powerful responsibility: --- to truly understand history or potentially be doomed to repeat it! Hopefully, we can discard identity politics to the dustbin of history someday. We should focus on the content of each other’s character, rather than create outlandish stereotypes that hold no water when exposed to the light of day! ◇

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SUSAN’S BOOK CORNER

The Hardy Boys Mystery Stories

Sue Piazza  
VALLEY PATRIOT BOOK REVIEWS

“The Tower Treasure” by Franklin W. Dixon - Copyright © 1927 by Simon & Schuster, Inc. - Published by: Grosset & Dunlap a member of The Putnam Publishing Group. Hardcover. 180 pages

The teenager’s father, Fenton Hardy, an ex-New York policeman is now a private detective. He is a well-liked and respected member in their small idyllic community. His two sons, both teens in the local high school, look to follow in his footsteps and also become detectives.

Their first case: one of their friends has his bright yellow “jalopy” stolen. The use of the word jalopy indicates a much earlier time period. Another indication is that at one point several friends need to raise twenty-five dollars; the most they can come up with is ten. Nowadays most people have iPhones, or other smart phones, and the ability to pay their bill, which comes up to a heck of a lot more than twenty-five dollars.

This book harkens back to a gentler time, a time of civility, manners. Shades of Mayberry. There is the stay at home mother whose first name we are never even privy to. She makes picnic basket lunches for her two high school detective boys. The only thing missing from her description was the pearls around her neck.

Characters are well development. Innocent people and the requisite unlikeable characters propel the story. The backstory of the individuals is in keeping with their

type and place in the plot. Sub plots work and add to the main story line. The graphics inside, of a pencil sketch type, are effective in portraying the scene. However, some dialogue is off. On page eighty-three one of the characters “responded eagerly” and yet most people speak in contractions especially when eager, anxious or excited, this did not happen here.

Twists, and turns abound making for an interesting plot line that, reminiscent of a Perry Mason episode, cannot be uncovered without that one specific detail that no one could guess.

There were a couple of plot hitches though. The story begins with the brothers talking while riding on separate motorcycles. I’ve ridden on the back of motorcycles and it’s difficult enough to speak with someone when one is speaking into their ear but to hold a conversation while people are at least ten feet away is not very believable. Then the car thief returns to steal a spare tire from the victim. And, calls the house from the barn and threatens the teen. But given these minor issues the mystery holds up.

Though geared toward a younger person it makes for a fun light-hearted read. While not overly complicated, it is packed with suspense, has minimal flaws, lots of action and a plot line that is uncomplicated and well executed.

Good light reading. Recommend.

*Susan Piazza is an author, columnist, and blogger. She can be found at: [susanpiazzaauthor.com](http://susanpiazzaauthor.com) ♦*

ABBY’S TEEN TALK

Methuen’s Police Mess, Merry Christmas

Abby Juknavorian  
VALLEY PATRIOT TEEN COLUMNIST

Six months. That is how long the residents of the City of Methuen have been subjected to the ongoing struggles of the Police salaries. The discourse seemingly appears to be endless as the year comes to a close; with no solution in sight. Methuen residents, like myself, are becoming increasingly tired and annoyed about the lack of transparency concerning this situation. The only thing we do seem to hear is the constant bickering of the City Councilors and city residents around us.

On Monday, November 19, 2018 Sean Cronin, the Deputy Commissioner of local services for the Department of Revenue, came before town Mayor James Jajuga and the City Council as the city’s state-appointed fiscal stability officer.

Upon meeting with the Council and Mayor, Cronin discussed and “identified two outstanding issues that could wreak havoc on the city’s budget: the ongoing battle over contracted police salaries, and the city’s propensity to greatly overspend for snow and ice removal” as stated in a local daily newspaper.

Back in July, new Police Captain’s salaries of \$188,206 were compromised form the original hefty amount of around \$435,000 annually. However, the one significant thing that many people are unaware of is that Mayor Jajuga does not have the necessary funds in the city’s coffers to uphold this new salary! With the current rate of pay for these few officers, the Methuen Police Department could see the layoffs (of mainly patrolmen) come February.

On November 17th, the City of Methuen kicked off our holiday season with the annual Santa Parade. Sadly, missing from the parade this year was the Methuen Police honor guard. Although the parade went well and was enjoyed by many, it would have been nice to see our local police and honor guard both marching and present at the event. Mayor James Jajuga said, “We just have to cut a couple things out. We’re not going to have motorcycles, we’re not going to have float escorts, [we’re] not going to have an honor guard. ... We’re trying to



trim it down.”

This is a result of the refused request from the Methuen Police Department for \$35,000 to be added to the special events budget. Chief Joseph Solomon threatened to reduce the size of the group participating in the parade when the measure did not pass, he did exactly that.

The holiday season is full upon us. With less than a month until Christmas, and the new year following shortly after, one can hope that residents of this city will finally say “enough is enough!”

This is the season for putting aside our petty squabbles and focusing on settling our differences. I encourage both the young and the old, the new and long-standing residents, the civilians and the elected, to speak up for what is right.

We need to learn to approach these situations with more understanding, love and compassion instead of this constant mood of greed and hunger for power. I sincerely believe that if we do, this Police fiasco could be solved quickly and most beneficially for the lives and safety of all residents.

And a shout out to the Essex County Sheriff’s Department Honor Guard and the Methuen Fire Department for marching in the parade, nicely done! ♦



Abigail Juknavorian is a junior in high school and a resident of Methuen. She is a member of the YMCA Youth and Government Press Corps and a delegate to the UMass Lowell Model UN.

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# The Baker-Sudders “Opioid Law is on the Wrong Side of History

## BENEATH THE SURFACE

# The Value of Merry Christmas

Bharani Padmanabhan, MD, PhD  
MEDICAL CORRUPTION COLUMNIST

Federal agencies including SAMHSA and the DEA released data for years documenting that overdose deaths were due to illegally-imported fentanyl and Heroin®. Despite the wide availability of real data, Charlie Baker and Marylou Sudders chose to defame, demonize and destroy patients who suffered chronic pain from various bad medical conditions and received legal pain medicine through their physicians.

Now this is the very same Sudders who has tenaciously blocked any change in laws that would require psychotic killers to be admitted into locked psychiatric units before they go out and murder people.

Under Sudders’ watch we have had at least two horrendous murder events, one in Taunton and one in Winchester, where it was plain to everyone that people were going to be killed. The Taunton man even went to Morton Hospital himself seeking inpatient admission. It was that man’s and our utter misfortune that he carried only Medicaid insurance. Sudders’ people deliberately blocked him from receiving inpatient psychiatric care. He left the hospital and murdered 3 people that same morning. Sudders claimed she still supported the rights of the psychotic to avoid locked wards even if they kill people.

Sudders however was perfectly happy to violate the rights of productive people in pain who took pain medicine, so they could be independent and not a burden on society. Sudders had absolutely no compunction about viciously destroying all those innocent lives. Being law abiding members of society naturally they could not ever purchase illegal Heroin® on the street even though they were in severe pain. They became bedridden and then killed themselves.

In the past two weeks we have had some welcome developments.

Firstly the delegates of the American Medical Association passed a resolution strongly condemning laws such as the Baker-Sudders “Opioid” Law that have directly harmed thousands of genuine patients who had been getting by on pain medicine and now were abandoned by compliant unprofessionals. Thousands of those patients have committed suicide nationwide, including my friend Bo who I wrote about here in 2017. See AMA Resolution 235 (Inappropriate Use of CDC Guidelines) passed 11/13/2018.

This was followed by a strong statement published this week by 160 pain specialists who also condemned the deliberate denial of access to life-supporting pain medicine to thousands of chronic pain pa-

tients by laws such as the Baker-Sudders “Opioid” Law and termed it a “large-scale humanitarian issue.”

“We, the undersigned, stand as a unified community of stakeholders and key opinion leaders deeply concerned about forced opioid tapering in patients receiving long-term prescription opioid therapy for chronic pain. This is a large-scale humanitarian issue. New and grave risks now exist because of forced opioid tapering: an alarming increase in reports of patient suffering and suicides within and outside of the Veterans Affairs Healthcare System in the United States.”

See <https://academic.oup.com/pain-medicine/advance-article/doi/10.1093/pm/pny228/5218985>

So, 160 pain specialists and the entire AMA have both repudiated the Baker-Sudders destruction of patients with genuine medical illnesses.

The arc of justice bends far away from Baker and Sudders as well as from their no-bid vendor, the Massachusetts Medical Society. Baker and Sudders are also responsible for the massive HIV outbreak in Lawrence that began in 2014 and still rages. Under their watch Lawrence became a manufacturing hub for fentanyl. Baker and Sudders are directly responsible for consciously creating a large-scale humanitarian disaster.

And why did they do it? In order to distract from the very real flood of illegal Heroin® and fentanyl washing through from China, Mexico, and now manufactured locally in Lawrence itself. And perhaps, long term, to set the stage for all pain patients to be shifted from generic oxycodone to expensive brand-name Suboxone® from Indivior. Now that is what I would call a golden retirement package. And knowing both Baker and Sudders, I wouldn’t put it past them. Not for a New York minute.

As expected right here in this VP column, a federal court has ruled that denying methadone to an inmate violates his medical care. Now major sections of the medical profession have condemned the Baker-Sudders approach as a humanitarian disaster. Meaning thousands of pain patients were unlawfully denied legitimate medical care that they had already been receiving by right.

Can’t wait for all the crime against humanity lawsuits against Baker and Sudders to fly.

*Bharani Padmanabhan MD PhD is a neurologist who specialized in multiple sclerosis in the Boston area until July 2017 when the medical board stole his license on behalf of competitors. scleroplex@gmail.com* ♦

Paul Murano  
VALLEY PATRIOT COLUMNIST

Welcome to Americamart. The mood is festive. Snow is falling, and Christmas lights and décor fill the department store. Let us now wander over to the check-out counter and eavesdrop on a conversation between the store manager (Manny Jurr) and a guy shopping (Guy Shaupin). Manny and Guy are now exchanging money....

Manny Jurr: That will be \$34.99.  
Guy Shaupin: There you go. Thank you.  
Manny: Thank you. Have a nice holiday.

Guy: Which one?  
M: Huh?  
G: Which holiday?  
M: Well, the one coming up.  
G: The one coming up? Doesn’t it have a name? If this were the end of November wouldn’t you wish me a Happy Thanksgiving?  
M: Yes.  
G: And if it was New Year’s Eve, wouldn’t you wish me a Happy New Year?  
M: Well, yes.  
G: And you wouldn’t have a problem wishing people a Happy Hanukkah, Ramadan, or Kwanzaa, would you?  
M: No, I wouldn’t.  
G: Then why is it difficult for you to say Merry Christmas? Instead you replace it with ‘happy holiday’.  
M: Well... not everyone is Christian. I don’t want to offend.  
G: Do you fear offending when you say Happy Hanukkah, Ramadan, or Kwanzaa?  
M: Hmm....I guess not. But Christmas just seems to offend people today.  
G: And why do you think that is?  
M: Well, I guess I haven’t thought about it much.  
G: The mere mention of the word Christ, even in Christmas, tends to make people squirm. I’m sure you’ve noticed this.  
M: I have. I’ve also noticed there is no discomfort when the names of Buddha, Mohammed, Moses, or Confucius are mentioned.  
G: Good point. And why is that? People are often offended at things they’re trying to hide from.  
M: They’re hiding from Jesus?  
G: Yes. Christ calls Himself the way, the truth, and the life (Jn 14:6). The hard-hearted are hiding from the truth, particularly about themselves and their choices, and are uncomfortable having to confront it this time of year. And this is a universal phenomenon: As soon as Adam and Eve ate the forbidden fruit they hid from God

among the trees in the garden (Gn 3:8).

M: But these people are usually atheists, aren’t they? Why would they care about what others believe or celebrate?

G: Good question. They don’t seem to be bothered by the celebration of non-Christian religions, do they?

M: No. Good point.

G: Think about it. Jesus is the only one who claimed to be God, not just a messenger or prophet like the others. It appears everyone, even atheists, have an innate knowledge that God commands of us a moral life, and that Christ is the Just Judge.

M: Interesting. When I was a kid everyone said Merry Christmas, regardless of their religion.

G: Yes. People of all religions get caught up in the spirit and joy of Christmas. Ironically, most of the popular secular Christmas songs we hear each year were actually written by Jews.

M: So this political correctness I’ve been caught up in – it’s a movement to stamp out Christmas from the culture because some want to stamp out Christ from their minds?

G: I think you hit the nail of the head. If they only understood that God loves them and wants them to be happy by forgiving and healing them of their iniquities. This is the message of Christmas.

M: These people need to hear this Truth; but I think some are too hell-bent on stamping out God from the psyche because of their attempt to be their own gods.

G: And that, in a nutshell, is the essence of secular progressivism. It’s rooted in the sin of pride and is the recipe for cynicism and unhappiness.

M: Then it’s high time we cut through the cynicism and spread some hope and joy - despite the resistance. Therefore, for the first time ever in my department store, I now dare to proclaim loudly and proudly: Merry Christmas, Guy!

G: And Merry Christmas to you, Manny! Be a light and spread the word.



Paul Murano is a college instructor and talk show host of Beneath the Surface on WCAP 980 AM. Podcasts available at <https://archive.org/details/@veritas777>.

Paul has graduate degrees in philosophy, theology and is certified in health care ethics. He speaks on topics relating faith and reason, and plays oldies at local venues as a one-man band. E-mail Paul at [PJDM@aol.com](mailto:PJDM@aol.com)

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# Christmas Time

Peter Larocque  
RELIGION COLUMNIST

Christmas time, Ah yes! Family tradition is one of the places my mind and heart go too around this time of year. Some good and some not so good, I would suspect the same is true for everyone’s life and family at this time.

My wife and I made a new tradition this year which is reading a Proverb a day. This idea didn’t originate with us, it was encouraged by one of our Global Pastors, Pastor Joseph Prince from Singapore. He was the one that brought to our attention that there are 31 Proverbs, 1 for each day of the month, therefore we could read a proverb every day. What we do is allow the Spirit of God in us to speak to our heart and as we read the Proverb that corresponds to the day of the month, then one verse would pop out and that verse becomes our verse for that day. Then we would write in our Proverb Journal along with any other inspiration that the Holy Spirit enlighten us with.

At first, I will admit for myself, it was a chore doing it, but now getting near the end of the year, the process is a joy. What have I found by doing this is that in my heart something is changing. Not by my working or self-effort, but reading and hearing myself say the verse and then mediating on it. This is what Proverbs 4:20-22, is talking about, “My son, attend to my words; incline thine ear unto my sayings.21 Let them not depart from thine eyes; keep them in the midst of thine heart.22 For they are life unto those that find them, and health to all their flesh.” Then verse 23 culminates this section with, “Keep thy heart with all diligence; for out of it [A Heart having God’s Words at the center] are the issues of life.” Another translation says, “for out of it are the outflowing of life”.

I see the more I allow the word to permeate my heart, “change” takes place from the inside-out.

Romans 12:2 adds this to our discussion, “And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, that you may prove what is that good and acceptable and perfect will of God.” The amplified version adds this footnote concerning the word transformed, from its Greek word we get our English word, “metamorphosis.” Referring to the process of where a caterpillar turns into a butterfly, in other words an outward, undeniable permanent change takes place.

To think that by just reading The Bible everyday which contains The Word of God which is able to produce a change in our hearts and lives probably sounds too good to be true, but yet it is! Jesus himself said in John 6:63, “It is the spirit that quickeneth [makes alive]; the flesh profiteth nothing: the words that I speak unto you, they are spirit, and they are

life.” The words on the pages of the Bible are not the words of men as some may assume, but as Jesus said, these words are spirit and life, meaning they are alive! It is these alive words that bring about change! These words bring Health to our Bodies and Minds!

Let’s read Hebrews 4:12, “For the word of God is quick, [alive] and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow, and is a discernor of the thoughts and intents of the heart.” This Word of God is alive and powerful and sharper than any two-edged sword, sharper than a laser!

We as Christians have the privilege of reading and meditating on this powerful alive sharp Word of God which is able to change our hearts and minds and makes us Christ-Like! Here is one more verse along these lines, 2 Corinthians 3:18, “But we all, with open face beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord, are changed [metamorphosis]into the same image from glory to glory, even as by the Spirit of the Lord.” By beholding, looking at, and reading and hearing God’s Word we are changed! We become what we behold in the mirror, from glory to glory. We become like Jesus! Living Life is all about him! So, what have you been looking at? What are you reading? What images are you putting in your mind?

The very first question asked in the Bible is found in Genesis 3:9, “And the LORD God called unto Adam, and said unto him, Where art thou?” Where are you? Obviously, Adam was lost and sequentially, so are we! God’s solution to man’s problem is found in the first question in the New Testament asked by the Wise Men around the birth of Jesus which we are celebrating, which we read in Matthew 2:2, “Saying, Where is he that is born King of the Jews? for we have seen his star in the east, and are come to worship him.” Where is He born King? Notice the Wise Men didn’t say that Jesus was to be King someday in the future, but Born King!

As we get together with family and friends to celebrate the birth of our King Jesus, let’s remember it is about Him and not about the decorations and gifts under the tree. It’s all about Him!

I end with this, “Hebrews 12:2, “Looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of our faith; who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God.”

Merry Christmas to you all and Have a Happy and Safe New Year! I pray that 2019 holds God’s best for you and your families!

Love,  
Peter Larocque  
peterlarocque@hotmail.com2 ◇

## TV TALK with BILL CUSHING



# ‘The Kominsky Method’

Bill Cushing  
VALLEY PATRIOT TV COLUMNIST

Netflix had a lot of success by pairing up a couple of aging stars like Jane Fonda and Lily Tomlin in ‘Grace and Frankie,’ so why not try it again? This time they’ve enlisted Michael Douglas and Alan Arkin in the charming new series ‘The Kominsky Method.’

Arkin and Douglas have never done a comedy series, and surprisingly enough, they’ve never worked together before. The two Oscar-winners are in the very capable hands of sitcom giant Chuck Lorre, best known for creating ‘Two and a Half Men’ and ‘The Big Bang Theory.’ Lorre has plenty of experience creating and writing sitcoms, and gives Arkin and Douglas a lot of good material to work with. They are perfect together in this series that blends jokes about getting old with the serious reflections that come with aging.

Douglas plays Sandy Kominsky, a Tony-winning actor who hasn’t had a big role in quite a while, so he makes a living running an acting class. Alan Arkin plays Norman Newlander, Sandy’s longtime agent and best friend who has just been widowed after decades of marriage to his wife Eileen, played by Susan Sullivan.

Both Sandy and Norman have daughters. Mindy (Sarah Baker) is stable and caring and reminds others often she wasn’t raised by Sandy, which pretty much explains why she is so stable. Norman’s daughter Phoebe (played excellently by Lisa Edelstein), is an addict and is a constant concern. Sandy is also in the process of beginning a relationship with one of his older students Lisa (Nancy Travis). Lisa is a recent divorcee with a teenage son. She’s treating herself to acting classes and gets Sandy to think about his life in ways he never did before.

Through it all, Sandy and Norman are very aware that they’re both a lot closer to the end of their time than the beginning. But the show manages to be real without getting consumed by the pain and fear behind it. Some of the stories are serious,

such as Norman contemplating his life without Eileen. Some are relatively light, like Mindy trying to get Norman to bail Sandy out of trouble with the IRS. But most manage to hit the sweet spot where they’re both serious and funny all at once, like when Sandy has a prostate cancer scare. His trips to the urologist are nothing short of hilarious thanks to the wonderful performance of Danny DeVito as Dr. Wexler.

But it’s the great writing and consistently smart and funny dialogue between the two leads that make the series shine and showcases their comedic timing and talent.

In one scene, Arkin’s Norman, faced with the prospect of living the rest of his life alone, wonders why he should even go on living.

“Oh, please,” Sandy tells him. “You’re not killing yourself.”

“Are you offering to murder me, because that would be very thoughtful,” Norm replies.

“You’re beloved. A lot of people would be very sad,” Sandy says.

“I’m not Tom Hanks,” Norm says.

“They’ll get over it.”

It’s that type of hilarious back and forth banter between Sandy and Norman that defines the show and consistently delivers its best moments.


Michael Douglas and Alan Arkin show that even though they are getting old, their performances aren’t, as they turn in some of the best work of their careers.

‘The Kominsky Method’ is available to stream on Netflix.

If you have any questions about TV you can email me at BillsTVTalk@gmail.com. I will answer all of your questions and will feature some of the questions I receive in a future Mailbag column.

Follow me on Twitter @BillsTVTalk and on Facebook at BillsTVTalk for daily up-to-the-minute TV news and discussion. ◇





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Welcomes Paula Drelick As Its New President



Penacook Place, a member of Covenant Health, is pleased to announce Paula Drelick has joined the team of its 160-bed skilled nursing facility, which offers short-term rehabilitation as well as long-term nursing and specialty memory care, as its new President.

Most recently, Drelick served as Executive Director for Genesis Healthcare’s Palm Center for Rehabilitation Excellence in Chelmsford, Massachusetts where she oversaw operations for the 118-bed facility and its 180-person staff. Prior to that, she held the same role at Kindred Transitional Care in Dedham, Massachusetts.

Drelick is a registered nurse. She holds a bachelor’s degree in Business Administration from Southern New Hampshire University (SNHU) and is working toward her master’s degree in Health Care Administration, also at SNHU.



SALVATORE’S RIVERWALK LAWRENCE  
AND CPFPRODUCTIONS ARE HOSTING  
AN AMAZING NEW YEAR’S EVE PARTY  
AND WE WANT YOU THERE!

A full night of entertainment featuring live stand up comedy with the biggest and best names in Boston (Carolyn Plummer, Mike Koutrobis, John David and MORE!), dancing to the music of DJ Mike, an amazing buffet by Salvatore’s award winning chefs (warm rolls & butter, Salvatore’s Signature Salad, Pasta with vodka cream sauce, Roast beef carving station, Chicken Florentine, Eggplant Parmesan, Roasted Red Bliss Potatoes, Seasonal Vegetable Medley, Late Night Pizza station), cheese crackers and stationary Hors d’oeuvres before, dessert after dinner, hats, noisemakers and a special champagne toast at midnight!

All for only \$99 Per Person

Doors open at 7:00 (Salvatore’s Function Facility Entry B Coliseum Room ~ Buffet at 7:30 ~ Comedy show at 9:00 ~ Music by DJ Mike at 10:00 ~ Champagne toast at midnight!

Get your tickets NOW before this event sells out! You don’t want to miss this crazy night of mayhem! Tickets at [EVENTBRITE.COM](http://EVENTBRITE.COM)

We have secured a special New Years Eve hotel rate of \$119/night with the DoubleTree Hilton Andover (123 Old River Rd) 4 miles from Salvatore’s. To make your room reservations, call 978-975-3600 and ask for the Hilton Hoppin’ New Years Rate.

DRACUT: FROM PAGE 13

holidays. Along those lines, for the people who live in McMansions and keep demanding that taxpayers cough up more and more funding for the schools, I wish you’d move to Lexington. Those of us in the town’s middle class, including our retirees, can’t keep up with your expectations, apparently. Not to mention that we’re sick of hearing how we’re nothing but cheap, horrible people who hate kids. In the words of Ebenezer Scrooge: “Bah, humbug!”

Last, but certainly not least, for public safety, I wish Dracut wasn’t so fired up about bringing weed-related businesses to town, especially for the retail sales of recreational marijuana.

A company that wants to run a recreational marijuana dispensary is expected to open the business on Pleasant Street, if granted a special permit by selectmen.

In June, town meeting passed three articles related to marijuana – one outlining boundaries for marijuana establishments, one restricting retail marijuana establishments to the industrial zone and one

imposing a 3-percent excise tax on retail sales of marijuana.

The path was blazed for retail marijuana businesses in town last year, after town meeting narrowly rejected a temporary moratorium. ‘Tis the season to be merry, apparently.

I don’t want to kill anyone’s holiday buzz, but I’m guessing anything that could possibly go wrong absolutely will. Call me paranoid.

Merry Christmas and Happy New Year!

Brian Genest is chairman of the Dracut Republican Town Committee. A marketing and communications expert with 20 years of success driving growth, maximizing ROI and boosting profits for consumer and high-tech brands, he has developed and executed strategic initiatives for a range of disruptive technologies, including robots, mobile commerce solutions and SaaS products. Earlier in his career, Genest worked as a newspaper reporter and editor for the Dracut Dispatch, Derry News and Billerica Minuteman. ♦

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To our neighbors,

As a North Andover based company and long-time residents of the Merrimack Valley, our thoughts go out to all those impacted by the recent gas crisis. While it is unknown exactly when gas services will be restored in the Merrimack Valley,

ACE Solar would like to offer assistance where we can.

If you purchase an ACE Solar system for your home between now and December 31, 2018, we will convert your gas water heater to an electric water heater at no cost to you.\* We hope this will help you and your family begin the return to normalcy with hot water while the solar system will help to offset the additional electricity cost for decades to come.

Solar systems vary in cost and size based on site conditions, but we offer \$0 down loans with great interest rates and unbeatable pricing to help you make the transition to renewable energy an easy and affordable one. Please contact us for a free assessment and more information.

Sincerely,

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\*Offer available to homeowners of Andover, North Andover, and Lawrence, and cannot be combined with any other offer. ACE Solar will purchase and install a new 30, 40 or 50-gallon Rheem electric water heater, or equivalent, at no cost to the homeowner. Offer available until December 31, 2018, restrictions may apply.





HERO: FROM PAGE 1

Peter’s Italian immigrant father was now a proud American, and consider Somerville, their new home during the Great Depression, so the family stayed in the US. In 1941, American singer Horace Heidt’s hit song “Goodbye Dear I’ll Be Back In A Year”, was about America’s Peacetime one-year draft. Drafted in 1940, the song reflected Peter’s personal military situation at the time. Peter trained for a year, with fellow his draft-ees, mostly men from Massachusetts and the other New England states. The 104th Regiment then rotated back to Camp Edwards, Massachusetts after their year of unit training, the Regiment arriving on December 6, 1941. Most of the men in the unit were excited to be discharged soon, their required year of training complete. Events of December 7, 1941 changed all their lives forever.

Educated in Somerville Public Schools and studying for a period of time at Northeastern University, Peter owned the Highland Food Shop in Somerville before the war. He sold the shop to a cousin when he was drafted. While in the US Army, Peter married an Irish girl, Mildred Mooney, on May 7, 1944 (despite the efforts of Peter’s Italian mother to derail their courtship) Looking at the mischievous grin on Peter’s beautiful bride’s face in their wedding photo, makes this writer wonder what she was thinking when the photo was taken on her wedding day.

After intense training in the United States Peter’s unit left for Europe, and landed in Cherbourg, France on September 7, 1944. Military training even during peacetime, is very arduous, and even dangerous for American servicemen. During their training period in the Florida Keys, Peter’s unit was required to remain behind during a hurricane evacuation. The Soldiers lashed themselves to bridges to avoid being sweep away by wind and water. I’d like to remind the readers, that in the 1940’s the US population was around 132 million men and women of all ages. 16 Million American men and women served in the US Military during the war. So why do we call Peter and his peers, the “Greatest Generation”? Because 15% of the total US population in 1941 served in the US Armed Forces, and among fit men aged eighteen to thirty, a better answer is almost all of them enlisted or where drafted. During one of my other Veteran interviews this summer, the man told me that at his high school, his class, the Class of 1943, every man was either drafted or volunteered.

Today’s youth? Consider a recent article in the Navy Times published in 2018, the article stated that most military planners agree that only around 17% of our current high school seniors, male or

female, would be accepted for military service. Military officials feel that physical fitness, mental fitness, moral fitness, and even functional literacy is lacking in many of today’s American High School Seniors. Of even more concern to today’s military leadership, is that many of the best and brightest of today’s aged youth, have so many career options, few are considering military service.

Captured by the German Army’s 11th Panzer, Peter spent time in Stalag III-A, Stalag III-F, and Stalag XII-A. He had two advantages that helped him survive the POW Camps. He did not smoke, which made his Red Cross issued cigarettes extremely valuable. Peter could trade his cigarettes for food and other essential items. The second was, as a Medic, he was not put on work details. Captured on November 12, 1944, Peter was in the POW camps until liberated by the Russians on April 28, 1945. The Russians, kept Peter and his comrades as a “guest”, for a few more weeks. This was a common practice, with the Soviet Union “biling” the United States for the soldier’s food and medical care.

Rumors of Allied POW’s liberated by the Russians being kept in captivity by Soviet Dictator Joseph Stalin after the war persist even today. No direct evidence is known to the American public of live Allied soldiers being held by the Russians after the war. In 1992 US President George H. W. Bush and Russian President Boris Yeltsin formed the Joint US-Russia Joint Commission on POW/ MIA’s. The only American Veteran’s Organization invited to this conference was the Veterans of Foreign Wars. Both sides have since turned over remains of military personnel to each other, returning the remains of these fallen heroes to their families. But the American Public is in the dark as to whether either the American’s or the Russians held each other’s military members against their will after World War II or during the Cold War. We liberated their POW’s and they liberated our POW’s. One can only hope the politicians on both sides turned the soldiers over to their country of origin?

Peter returned home on September 28th 1945, reading his Silver Star citation, awarded to him for his bravery on November 12, 1944, I learned that he was missing in action, or MIA when he was awarded the medal. The Silver Star is the US Military’s third highest combat decoration. Only the Medal of Honor and the Distinguished Service Cross rank higher. But I cannot help to think the real hero might have been his wife Millie, his young Irish-American bride, recently married, stuck in Somerville with a suspicious Italian mother in law?

Peter and his wife, whom everyone

Is Intermittent Fasting For You?

Rick Bellanti  
HEALTH & WELLNESS COLUMNIST

Intermittent fasting is quickly becoming one of the most popular health and fitness trends with favorable results for sustainable weight loss from diet centers, nutritionist and weight loss coaches. It is an eating pattern where you cycle between periods of eating and not eating (known as fasting). Fasting increases your bodies responsiveness to insulin, which regulates your blood sugar and helps with controlling hunger.

There are a couple different ways we use intermittent fasting, some will do a daily fasting and others choose to do a weekly fasting. Both of which split the day or week into simple eating periods and fasting periods. The most popular form of fasting is called the 8-16 Method (which is the plan I am currently doing myself). It is where you choose and eight hour period in the day where you will do all your healthy eating. Then fast for the other sixteen hours of the day, by not eating anything. Which means no calories should be consumed in those sixteen hours although you may have non caloric drinks such as water, black coffee or tea. You may still take medications (as long as they don’t require you take them with food, vitamins and supplements are okay to have as well, as long as they are free from calories.

Most people already fast for eight hours a day (by sleeping), after all that’s why your first meal of the day is called breakfast meaning “Break Fast”, and just by extending that fasting period a few hours before bed and a few hours after waking up, could reap some amazing health benefits. Studies have shown that by fasting intermittently daily, could not only help with weight loss but also help protect against diseases like Type II diabetes and heart disease by showing significant reductions in blood sugar and insulin levels, thus improving your quality life greatly.

There is a convenience factor of fasting that I like, knowing that the eight hour block I choose to eat is 11:00am and my last meal consumption is 7pm. I fast between 7pm and 11am only consuming my nightly supplements and plenty of water. You won’t miss eating much because the majority of those sixteen fasting hours you are asleep. Breaking the fast in the morning (in my case 11:00am with a nutritious protein shake). Followed by a lunch and dinner with healthy snacks in between,



to keep your metabolism burning at high capacity during those eight hours of non-fasting.

You can also choose to try a weekly fasting method, where you eat like you normally would for five days and choose two days during the week to fast, which you would not consume any solid food with calories for two complete days. Also, known as a two-day cleansing. Where you would just consume a specific cleanse drink throughout the day cleansing your body (on a cellular level) and staying away from calories.

There’s strong evidence these types of cleanses bolster stress resistance and combat inflammation at a cellular level as you experience a metabolic switch in which the liver’s energy stores are depleted, and so the body’s cells start using fat and ketones for energy. I have tried this method and it did work with much success for me in the past. However, being recently diagnosed with Type II Diabetes, I could not go the longer two day periods with no calories as my insulin levels would drop to low, and I would experience dizziness. So I choose to do the 8-16 Method.

It’s not yet clear whether there are any potential long-term risks associated with intermittent fasting, but it is a good way to jump start a weight loss program for an overweight or obese person. Remember to always check with your doctor first before starting any type of fasting or weight loss program and remember there is no amount of exercise or fasting that will outrun your bad eating habits, so continue to eat healthy foods limiting daily carbohydrates and added sugars.

*Rick Bellanti is a wellness columnist and is on a journey himself to lose 240lbs, and has lost 160lbs since the start of 2015. You can find Rick on Facebook at: Getting Healthy with Rick Bellanti* ♦

called Millie, had two sons and two daughters. His cousin not wanting to sell him back the store, after the war, Peter worked for the US Post Office in Somerville until he retired. They now have nine grandchildren, four great grandchildren, three great, great, grandchildren with a fourth on the way. At age 102, Peter Fantasia walked his granddaughter Kathryn down the aisle on her wedding day on October 13, 2018. Her own dad died in 1999, and Peter considers escorting her down the aisle, one of the greatest moments in his life. How tough was this generation? As a young man, Peter, stayed behind when overrun by the Nazi’s, tending to his wounded comrades, earning the Silver Star while listed as Missing in Action. A 102 years old, nothing would stop Peter from walking his granddaughter down the aisle at her wedding.

A very warm thank you to Peter’s daughters Martha and Annette for writing this with me. Much of the article came from the four of us, Peter, Martha, and Annette talking one afternoon. Peter’s

grandson Brendan Gillis wrote a great report on his heroic grandfather back in 2003 for school, which I used as a template for this article. (He got an A). The article by William Shelton in the Somerville Times on July 1, 2016 was equally valuable to my research on this American Hero. I was honored to read his actual Silver Star citation, awarded when he was still listed as Missing in Action.

*John Cuddy served in the US Navy’s Construction Battalions (known as the Seabees) after retiring from the Navy, he used his GI Bill and earned a BA in History and an MA in Economics from the University of Massachusetts on the Lowell Campus. He has been employed in Logistics at FedEx for the last 21 years. If you know a World War II Veteran who would like their story told, please email him at John.Cuddy@Yahoo.com.* ♦





# The Abuse of Diamond Girl

Between 2014-2017, Methuen, MA Animal Control responded to several calls of neglect for a sweet-natured dog named Diamond. She was underweight and flea-infested. She had poor skin and fur, and old burn marks. Reportedly, there wasn't enough evidence to press charges or remove Diamond. The owner refused to surrender her. Early in 2018 the owner moved but did not bring Diamond; perhaps she was unwelcome. Diamond was a pit bull terrier, an unfairly marginalized breed known for their loyalty and affection. Thus, her whereabouts were unknown until September 23, 2018 when she was found tied to a pole in Lawrence. She was sickly and had no food, water, or identification. Over the next 12 days an unsettling chain of events unfolded.

Lawrence Animal Control brought Diamond to the holding facility. As the standard seven-day limit approached, she became very weak and listless. Per city policy, the ACO could not take Diamond to a vet. Instead, the ACO found a foster home. Animal Rescue Konnection (ARK), a nonprofit rescue devoted to helping at-risk dogs was contacted by the fosters for guidance and help with veterinary care. Tests confirmed she had several health issues including nourishment, a heart issue, and extreme lethargy. Worse, she was diagnosed with end-stage renal failure and given less than a week to live.

To help right a severe wrong, the foster family chose to give Diamond the most loving hospice care possible and a peaceful, dignified passing. So they brought her home with medicine. They set her up in a special corner with pillows and warm blankets. They laid down on the floor to keep watch. As expected, she gradually declined. But through all this, she refused to soil the house and struggled to reach the door. She was that obedient. She was that respectful. She was that good.

Meanwhile, the owner learned of Diamond's situation through social media and contacted the fosters but only made empty promises to help her dog. After Diamond responded to the owner's voice over the phone, the fosters felt it important for her to say goodbye. Since the owner did not have a car, the fosters brought Diamond to her. Though very ill and despondent, when the owner approached, this loyal dog opened her eyes, lifted her head, and licked the woman's face. It was a tearful experience. This undeserving person was her world. The neglect, fleas, lack of food, suspicious burns, abandonment and untreated disease didn't matter to Diamond. She simply poured out the remaining love in her heart.

That night Diamond experienced a horrific seizure. It was time. The ACO and foster held Diamond during the euthanasia procedure. She passed in their arms on October 5th at 2:30 a.m. Staff at the 24-hour veterinary hospital contracted by the city refused to keep her body for a few hours without an additional payment



for extended stay so the ACO and foster carried a box holding Diamond's body to the ACO's car where it remained until the morning shift. Details of any investigation about Diamond's treatment and abandonment are still unclear.

Diamond's story defines the unbiased, unconditional love of dogs. Her devotion shows us how pets have an intuitive emotional edge over humans. Diamond was failed by her owner as well as outdated animal control practices. During the seven-day hold, there are no standards of care for exercise, socialization, vet care, or social networking to find the owners or a better placement. Additionally, in Lawrence the kennels are unheated. In this environment an animal's emotional and behavioral well-being quickly erode, leaving them vulnerable, stressed and less likely to be adopted.

Lawrence needs volunteers to help the ACOS with care, but they are not allowed in the pound which sits on prison grounds. Prison inmates have repeatedly asked to volunteer to care and walk the dogs, clean the kennels and assist with construction and maintenance, which is sorely needed, but are continually denied. Ironically, Lawrence's pound was intentionally built on the prison grounds so eligible inmates could volunteer. This original goal has yet to be achieved even though prison animal programs have proved highly successful across the country.

Contact your legislators and local politicians. Contact your own ACO, police department, and health department to check their policies and procedures that your tax dollars support. Cities are responsible for their own, and that includes animals. Things will change only when voters ask questions and show their elected officials how important this issue is to them. Do this in honor of a very gentle dog named Diamond. *FOR THE COMPLETE STORY GO TO VALLEYPATRIOT.COM* ♦

## Robin's Kitty Corner

# Christmas Kitty

Robin Desmet  
VALLEY PATRIOT KITTY COLUMNIST

Who wouldn't want to wake up on Christmas morning to find that Santa had gotten them a fluffy kitten as a Christmas gift? As appealing as this may sound to many of you, it actually may not be the best idea. The holidays are a special time of year, filled with fun, excitement, and magic. Part of the enjoyment of the season is giving gifts to our loved ones that we have thoughtfully selected and that we anticipate will bring them joy and happiness. But giving an animal as a gift can be problematic.

They don't call it "The busy time of year" for nothing. Around the holidays, commitments abound. There is shopping to be done and gifts to wrap. Friends and relatives are coming and going all month long. There are parties to attend and concerts to enjoy. The month of December is a whirlwind of decorating, shopping, friends, family, and events. It is a fun time of year, but with everything going on, introducing a new pet into the mix can get complicated.

The noise, the confusion, and the lack of consistency will make your new pet will feel stressed and anxious. Even if the kids really want a new furry friend as a gift, it may be better to wait until after the holidays to actually bring your new family member home. Opening up gifts on Christmas morning is fun, but for an animal that is new to the house, the chaos and confusion can be overwhelming.

Introducing new pets to pets you already own can be a challenge around the holidays. These introductions are best done in a slow and controlled manner so that resident pets and new pets have time to get used to each other. You are going to want to bond with your new pet, as well as give your old pets the proper love and attention they deserve. You will need to be home to supervise the introduction of any new pet to your current pets, and to watch how they interact. None of these



things should be rushed. All of this can be difficult to achieve when your schedule is loaded with commitments and you are rushing around trying to get all of the shopping and wrapping done.

The house at the holidays can be fraught with danger for new pets. Electric cords, poisonous plants, and candles can all spell disaster. Decorations, ribbons, and tinsel all pose threats to curious pets. You may find your carefully placed decorations unexpectedly strewn all over the house or your tree toppled to the ground. When bringing home new pets at the holidays I would suggest decorating the tree only with unbreakable ornaments. Nix the Amaryllis and the Holly Berries and no string, ribbons, or bows on any presents. Your resident cats may be used to the holiday decorations, but new, young pets are both active and curious. Prevention is the best way to avoid disaster.

So, enjoy the holidays, but by all means do not surprise anyone with a pet they did not specifically want. Animal given as "gifts" often end up in animal shelters in January. Have fun this holiday season and keep things safe and enjoyable for your family, friends, and pets.

Robin Desmet, Rph and MSPCA Volunteer ♦



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Property Sales, Foreclosures for NOVEMBER, 2018 in Andover, Lawrence, Methuen, North Andover. (All properties are listed in order; seller, buyer, price, address.)



Northern Essex Registry of Deeds  
M. Paul Iannuccillo, Register

William Francis Galvin  
Secretary of the Commonwealth  
of Massachusetts

ANDOVER

Esquared Realty Trust & John Corbett Tr, Alexander R & Jessica A Blagojevich, \$1,640,000, 10 Barron Ct  
Twin Birch Development LLC, Jeffrey & Nicole Salowe, \$1,150,000, 2 Monarch Ln  
Matthew T & Lynne S Casey, Prashant Kumar & Shamala Pulakeri, \$810,000, 5 Timothy Dr  
Cibos Family Revocable Trust of 2017 & Richard C & Kathleen M Cibos Trs, Sharon McCauley Ferguson & William Anthony Pickett Jr, \$615,000, 101 High Plain Rd  
Satish C Guttikonda & Anjana Nekkanti, Sadmir & Amra Ovcina, \$613,000, 15 Glen Meadow Rd  
Angelo Petrosino Tr & Reliance Realty Trust, Liliana Petrosino, \$330,000, 7 Candida Wy  
Prashant Kumar Tr & Shamala K Pulakeri Tr & Kumar Living Trust, Tamar Brady Driscoll & Thomas Joseph Driscoll, \$576,000, 8 Apollo Cir  
Timothy & Grace L Chu & Jessica Won/ Jessica Reyes, Andrew Richard & Elizabeth A Duca, \$501,000, 18 Olde Berry Rd  
Juliann A Cobino, Jaime R & Leslie S Macasaet, \$225,000, 237 North Main St Unit 3  
Sang Goo Lee & Sung Jin Jeong, Frontline Realty Inc, \$295,000, 900 Brookside Dr Unit G  
Edward J & Pamela B Saras, Michael J McCluskey, \$775,000, 22 Reservation Rd  
Avalon at St Clare Inc, PP Andover Investors LLC, \$32,400,000, 460 River Rd  
James A Hackett & Sharon Atwood Hackett, James A & Noelle J Statires, \$1,300,000, 15 Blueberry Cir  
E Mei Shen Hsieh & Joseph S C Hsieh, James & Marygrace Coglia, \$595,000, 4 Landau Ln  
Arthur F Cannon Jr & Umporn Cannon, Jeffrey & Cherry Ann Vicente, \$540,000, 8 Greenwood Rd  
Cheryl A MacKay, Holly D Garabedian, \$225,000, 55 High St Unit 3  
Linda J Daddario, Laurel & William LaValley, \$600,000, 4 Apollo Cir  
Richard D Lindsay Jr & Martha C Lindsay, Tower Family Realty LLC, \$520,000, Cricket Cir & Lowell St  
Sarah Carreira/Sarah E Lindsay, Tower Family Realty LLC, \$240,000, Cricket Cir & Lowell St  
Christine Harshbarger/Christine A Lindsay, Tower Family Realty LLC, \$240,000, Cricket Cir & Lowell St  
Joseph E Ford Est & Christine Ford, Richard Licciardi Jr, \$222,500, 14 Longwood Dr Unit 5  
Kevin A & Wendy T Callery Trs & Kevin A Callery Family Trust & Wendy T Callery Family Trust, Robert W & Courtney Merklinger, \$1,515,000, 5 Warwick Cir  
Well Fargo Bank N A , RJJ Properties LLC, \$587,131, 11 Phoenix Pl  
Mary Ann Jurek & Andrea Doherty & Joseph Pasquale, Richard F Benson, \$500,000, 147 Chestnut St  
Megan E Eaton , Joseph J & Kellee C Rugiero, \$388,000, 149 Haverhill St  
R Jamieson Waldinger, Danielle Trull, \$349,900, 240 Andover St Unit 2  
Adriana Donahue Tr & Donahue Realty Trust, Cristian M Martinez, \$225,000, 3 Longwood Dr Unit 108  
Kevin M & Tracy G McGovern, Cyril & Mary M Buckley, \$1,150,000, 14 Wolcott Ave  
James H & Lisa A Tammaro, Dustin Russell & Venus Takkarnpanit, \$610,000, 143 Lovejoy Rd  
Gabriel B & Kathryn Freitas/Kathryn Collins, Khalid Choukri, \$570,000, 9 Brown St  
Stephen R & Patrice D Minton Trs & Minton Family Trust, Michael McPherson

& Sonia Smith McPherson, \$525,000, 8 Ferndale Ave  
Anne Christine Peck Tr & Anne Christine Peck Trust, Christopher L Ham & Christa M Elliott, \$523,980, 110 Lowell St  
Michelle Brodsky Tr & Michelle Brodsky Revocable Living Trust, Kithunu Pathiraja, \$475,000, 13 Partridge Hill Rd  
Jack S Golden & Marcia Golden Est, Jeremy C Breen, \$179,900, 60 Washington Park Dr Unit 11C  
Ralph G Hancock, 85 Essex LLC, \$120,000, 77 Essex St  
Valliammai Palaniyappan & Palaniyappan Murugappan, Mark & Barbara Curtin, \$300,000, 55 High St Unit 5  
Lulu Yang & Enyou Lu, Anjaneya Vittal Kumar Yerramsetty & Sravanthi Dasari, \$300,000, 502 Brookside Dr Unit 300C  
John L Finneran Est & Michael E Lombard , Maple Avenue Trust & Mabel Stefanidis Tr & George Vasiliades Tr, \$510,000, 55 Maple Ave  
Pulte Homes of New England LLC, Joanne M Conboy, \$415,855, 1 Francis Dr Unit 405  
Norma Caserta, Cadence Capital Group LLC, \$485,000, 3 Archer Ln  
Lawrence M Richard, Tomas Tansley & Piyu Dhaker, \$690,000, 11 Blood Rd  
Paul F & Jami M Marad, S & L Trust & Steven A & Louise Campbell Trs, \$567,900, 96 Elm St  
Shujia Dai & Xianjun Chen, Kristin C Koehler, \$490,000, 244 Andover St Unit 2  
Jessica L Newcomb, Kevin M & Edwina Leahy, \$485,000, 416 High Plain Rd  
Gerald J & Tracy N Callahan, David J Richards, \$1,000,000, 6 David Dr  
Pulte Homes of New England LLC, Douglas C & Nancy J Magnuson, \$485,995, 1 Francis Dr Unit 401  
Perry Frankston & Carolyn Taylor, Edward & Rachel Dudley, \$465,000, 14 Riverina Rd  
Charleen & Zenon O Smotrycz, Thomas McNaughton & Gail Ann Beardsley, \$1,975,000, 6 Trevino Cir  
Xiaoxin Yu & Cui Qin Chen, Weidong Ji, \$311,000, 1000 Spring Valley Dr Unit F  
Peter O & Gail S Newton, Ryan Murphy & Alyssa Marie Jann, \$745,000, 7 Deerfield Wy  
William Sanford Durland III & Kathleen Joyce Durland, Jonathan D Fournier & Julia L Coleman, \$670,000, 9 Argyle St  
Andrea F S Kahan/Andrea P Kahan & Jeremy H Kahan, David & Jessica Tamarin, \$499,900, 65 Brown St  
Kimberlee A Brown & Kevin P Harron, Qian Huang, \$187,000, 20A Washington Park Dr Unit 2

LAWRENCE

Jose A & Jeannette Santos , Ernesto N Pena, \$449,000, 21-23 Fairmont St  
Nancy M Fay, Hiba Makdesi & Hanaa Salloum & Abdullah Wahbeh, \$329,900, 20 Beresford St  
Francisco A Pena, Neftali A Arias, \$200,000, 326 Lowell St  
Fernande Goulet, Premium Properties Inc, \$62,450, 459 Lowell St  
Evelyn R Sandoval, Joann Taveras, \$292,500, 94 Salem St  
42-44 Jamaica Street LLC, Marcos D Lima, \$275,000, 44 Jamaica St Unit 2  
German Ceballo, Yelissa M Lopez & Luis M Lora, \$370,000, 108-110 Lexington St  
Antonio Reguero, Victor Callas Jr, \$213,000, 18 State St  
Well Fargo Bank N A , Kyle James Harrison, \$200,000, 37 Marlboro St  
Karen M Kluk, Morrison Family Trust LLC, \$170,000, 543 Mt Vernon St  
Jose Leonardo, Wilton Garcia-Garcia & Arcenio Paulino, \$336,557.85, 182-184 Water St  
Paulino Castillo & Beatriz Ortega, Pelayo

G & Yolanji Maria, \$300,000, 21 Summit Ave  
Lissett San Pablo, Raldy I Reyes Amparo & Nicaury M Pol Placido, \$404,000, 182-184 Exchange St  
Edwin Rolon, Zuyle Charie Martinez, \$235,000, 159 Andover St Unit B  
Tae Young & Deanna Kang/Deanna McCarthy, Elevidania Taveras & Ana D Quezada Collado, \$302,000, 13 Crestshire Dr  
Joseph M Hackney & Ann Cipkins & Theresa L Hackney, Christian O Paniagua, \$287,500, 26 Mt Vernon St  
Slava Pride, Keisy A Aguero, \$235,000, 34-36 Doyle St  
Wilmington Trust N A Tr, BCAD LLC, \$199,114, 5 Harriman St  
Jose A Sanchez & Santa M Arias Lara, Rafael Mancia, \$475,000, 9-11 Saratoga St  
Karl M & Diane L Armano, Manuel Santana & Ines A Ramirez, \$436,000, 214-216 Bailey St  
Olli O Penniman, Johanna Carrasco, \$370,000, 252 Farnham St  
Jose Luis Frias, Junior Anziani, \$344,000, 17 Walnut St  
Brenda Rheume-Wilson Tr & Ronald Rheume Trust, 79-81 Lynn Street LLC, \$545,000, 79-81 Lynn St  
Mary V Haynes & Thomas R Haynes & George J Haynes, Therese & Robert D Walton, \$289,900, 18 Mount Auburn St  
Basilia J Batista, Pipoup Bou, \$267,000, 68 Thornton St  
John R Cincotta, Lorenzo Santiago, \$219,000, 94 Myrtle St  
Jose Robles & Damaris Gonzales/Damaris Gonzalez, Benjamin Nunez & Ana Francisca Nunez, \$219,000, 35 Lynn St Unit 2  
Thomas F Cusack III/Thomas Cusack & Cathleen P Jones/Kathleen Cusack & Sheilah Cadieux/Sheilah Cusack Cadieux & Maureen Cusack/Maureen King, Carlos M Javier & Yasory Parra, \$370,000, 11 Kress St  
Jessica M Bragel & Michael J Buonagurio, Ashlaine S Etienne & Carmelle Alexis & Perets V Isma, \$352,000, 7 Marc Ln  
Polish American Veterans Julian Stopyra Post Inc, Spanish Free Methodist New Hope Church, \$350,000, 23 Monmouth St  
Lorraine M Lynch, Mary Polanco, \$275,000, 352 Mt Vernon St  
LC Properties LLC, Jorge A Flores & Daria Lebron, \$480,000, 161-163 Spruce St  
Michael M & Cesarina Silfa, Carmen Milagro Quezada, \$275,000, 7 Perarl Ave  
Crown Cork & Seal USA Inc, BIV-155 Shepard LLC, \$8,150,000, 155 Shepard St  
Vo euth Kan, Wilber R Guevara, \$435,000, 24-26 Everett St  
Esperanza & Evaristo Nunez, Linares Nunez, \$400,000, 62-64 Bromfield St  
Sandra J Parchuke, Mervin Reyes, \$380,000, 11a-11B Norris St  
Claude Marquis, Sobeyda Gomez Gonzalez & Betzaida Gomez Gonzalez, \$373,000, 160 Dawes St  
Michael Tarshi, Hide Salcedo, \$335,000, 77 Kingston St  
Lora & Marquez Trust & Jose L Marquez Tr & Zoila Lora Marquez Tr, Marta Romero, \$107,500, 189-189A Newbury St  
JMJ Realty Trust & Joyce Robito Tr & Gerald Robito Tr, Sucre Junior Dominguez Reyes & Adairis C Cabrera, \$415,000, 10-12 East Platt St  
Winthrop Realty Trust & Kathleen Guselli Tr, Danielle M Hart, \$375,200, 531 Mount Vernon St  
Brian Christopher & Katherine Mary Armeen, Dilia Almonte, \$275,000, 54-56 Osgood St  
Maira U Ruiz-Montero, Dominga Ozorio De Polanco & Maria Del Carmen Rodriguez & Dalmin Elizabeth Castanos, \$252,000, 14 Cedar St

Cesarina M Guzman/Cesarina M Suarez, Olga Cruz, \$235,000, 127 May St  
Dang V Tran, Huy Nguyen & Van Le, \$140,000, 206 Arlington St Unit B  
115-117 Myrtle Street LLC, Franlel Santos Gomez, \$435,000, 115-117 Myrtle St  
Agripino A Caba, Loyda Rosanna Romero & Michael Silva, \$400,000, 6-8 Phillips St  
Michelle L & Rick M Seccareccio, Aaron R & Sara N Santana, \$355,000, 4 Wood Ln  
Chloe LLC, Matthew Wright, \$296,000, 31 South Bowdoin St  
Juan Reyes, Ana C Burgos, \$389,200, 19 Wyman St  
Jason Sabatino, Luisa R Reyes Liz & Nidia S Liz, \$340,000, 101 Myrtle St  
John Hernandez & Nayerda K Cuevas, Evelyn Rosa & Felix Antonio Rosa Sr & Margarita Rosa, \$320,000, 69 Bigelow St  
Michael Courtney Tr & 1 Silesia Realty Trust, Marvin A Ramirez, \$322,000, 1 Silesia Ct  
Brenda L Brightman/Brenda L Newbrough & Robert W Newbrough, Leidy & Rodolfo Vargas, \$284,000, 49 So Bowdoin St  
Phillip D Mesquita, Santa A Bastardo, \$240,000, 29 Columbus Ave  
Shelia LaPlante, Philip Bradish, \$240,000, 158 Gilbert St  
Deborah Bowler, Jason Feinman, \$180,000, 38A Ridgewood Cir Unit 1  
Ruth Heath Tr & Mateo Family Irrevocable Trust, Juana Naveo, \$495,000, 23-27 Hancock St  
Thomas Clark, Ana Plasencia & Rosmery Plasencia, \$469,000, 51-55 Boxford St  
Olli O Penniman, Amaurys Jimenez Diaz, \$442,000, 155-159 Newbury St  
Scott Oleary, Brenda L Newbrough, \$399,000, 7 Court St  
Edilio Garcia & Joselin Ceballos, Elmer O Pineda, \$387,800, 304-306 Lawrence St  
Elie El-Hayel, Richard Benjamin Figari, \$324,900, 7 Lynn St  
William Pickett Jr, Leonard Rojas, \$320,000, 45 Beresford St  
Carmen M Rivera Tr & CM Rivera Realty Trust, Elidio Otoniel Avila Guzman & Yoselin Avila, \$315,000, 40 Hoffman Ave  
Matthew T Gill & Rafael L Sainz , Spencer D & Stephanie P Buchholz, \$307,500, 5 Yale Ter  
Lois Daponte/Lois Green, Katherine Lopez, \$280,000, 463 Riverside Dr  
Orelvis Toledo, Augustine & Raquel R Gracia, \$258,000, 10 Jasper St  
Margaret Stone & Carol Belinsky & Diane Noel & Rita Kimball, Willie Rafael Ramirez, \$250,000, 53 Dana St

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Kathleen M & Kevin F Gerow, Erik S & Erin M Fischer, \$425,200, 6 Sugar Pine Ln  
Collin J & Laura Hart, Nancy Connor, \$358,000, 59 West St  
Guang Lei Shi & Susia Jiang, Guang Kui Shi & Ying Li, \$250,000, 139 Armstrong Ave Unit B  
L&R Realty Corp, Robert Landry Tr & Landgig Real Deal Realty Trust, \$35,000, 125-127 Center St  
Maple Park Reserve LLC, William & Tanya Alberghene, \$600,000, 4 Mariah Dr  
Homes at Great Oaks LLC, Joyce M Lyles, \$570,000, 6 Sadie Ln  
Shaun & Pamela Carey, Brian Robinson & Angela Menzel, \$490,000, 5 Norwich Ln  
William F & Tanya L Alberghene, Patricia Arrajj & Christine Gallagher, \$450,000, 24 Frye Rd  
Ramon C Perez, Christian Taveras, \$310,000, 3 Lavoie Ave  
Frank Dempsey & Heather Holt Dempsey,

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REAL ESTATE: FROM 25

Salvador & Iris J Rivera & Jonathan Otero, \$289,900, 105 Birchwood Rd  
Michael A Ford Sr & Michael A Ford Jr & Ashlyn Ford, Maria C DeJesus, \$307,000, 9 Winthrop Ave  
Paul Nguyen, Thai Nguyen & Anh VB Dang, \$212,000, 83 Comet Rd  
Toll MA IV LLC, George K Norwood Jr & Kelly A Norwood, \$686,503, 69 Pine Tree Dr Unit 75  
Randy J MacDougall & Reina Torres, Daniel & Courtney L Bowden, \$374,900, 5 West Bedford St  
William R Bourassa Sr Tr & Susan A Bourassa Tr & Bourassa Realty Trust, ACE Realty Development Inc, \$300,000, 6 Apple Crest Dr  
Gloria Burnham, James L Landry Jr, \$270,000, 45 Washington St Unit 99  
JPMorgan Chase Bank N A, Gaspar Investment Inc, \$248,500, 39 Meriline Ave  
Alexis G Samra Halloran/Alexis G Samra & Christine E Samra & Josephine Shiepe Est , Jesus M Gonzalez & Ana Maria Degonzalez, \$365,000, 118 Swan St  
Leccese Family Trust of 2010 & Michael A Leccese Tr & Wendy L Leccese Tr/Wendy Latorre Leccese Tr, Sisi Zhou, \$239,000, 19 Hampshire St Unit 301  
Toll MA IV LLC, Leighann Russo & Frederick Russo & Diana Russo, \$602,161, 62 Pine Tree Dr Unit 134  
Peter Tsaklis & Christopher Torres, Humza S Elsiaah & Youmna Mohammad & Mohamed M A Salem & Omnia M S Sanad, \$415,000, 81-83 Plymouth St  
Monica M Ratkovich Tr & G A Baker Realty Trust, Jonathan Morasse, \$349,900, 60 Hampstead St  
Marianne J McKay/Maryanne McKay, Cameron J Foote, \$323,000, 827 Riverside Dr  
Bernadette Carol Doherty, Karen L Lottatore, \$305,000, 1 Riverview Blv Unit 3-002  
Meray Marawi, Doreen M McNally, \$244,900, 23E Oak St Unit 12  
Derek & Crystal Joiner, Cartus Financial Corp, \$390,000, 4 Currier St  
Cartus Financial Corp, Jimmy Costa, \$390,000, 4 Currier St  
Mark & Mary Scione, Diamond Capital Inc, \$359,000, 13-19 Merrill St  
Thomas R Bryant III Tr & Thomas R Bryant III Living Trust, Tania Y Maria, \$319,900, 26 Ames St  
Wayne R & Linda S Gebhardt, ADTR II LLC, \$32,500, 88 Lowell St  
Alcro Development LLC, Francis G & Janice A Muise, \$653,900, 34 Stone Castle Dr Unit 20  
Christopher B Cronin Tr & 5 Canobieola Realty Trust, Charles F & Wanderlene F Cunha, \$400,000, 5 Canobieola Rd  
Gina L Rauch, Luis A Ives, \$369,900, 15 Hillcrest Ave  
Michael Hughes, Melanie A Blanchet, \$279,900, 5 Sawyer St  
Admanfred LLC, Charmaine & Roger

Hinds, \$262,000, 1 Riverview Blv Unit 1-203  
Geraldo H Pimenta & Maria Irene Moreira, 65 Mystic St-Unit 11 LLC, \$141,000, 71 Mystic St Unit 71-10  
Charles E Chadsey III/Charles Chadsey & Kathleen D Michel Tr & MDK Properties Realty Trust, Stag Tribe Capital LLC, \$610,000, 37-45 Center St  
Kathleen D Michel Tr & MDK Properties Realty Trust & Charles E Chadsey III/Charles E Chadsey, Matias Capital LLC, \$560,000, 64-66 Broadway  
Desiree & Johnny Ngen, Jason & Jennifer Lay, \$503,000, 3 Strawberry Ln  
George Chaya, Kevin Zahn Jr & Stephanie Zahn & Kevin Zahn Sr, \$345,000, 168 Maple St  
Jason & Jennifer E Lay, Steven Latina/Steven V Latina, \$292,000, 19 Madison St  
Rafael & Mercedes Antigua, Elena E Campbell, \$210,000, 297 Broadway Unit 1  
Francis G & Janice A Muise, Jennifer Lee & Edward Francis Mrozowski III, \$620,000, 6 Boxwood Dr  
Edward F Mrozowski III/Edward F & Jennifer Lee Mrozowski , Derek J & Laura Doucette, \$591,500, 23 Arrowwood St  
Henri Pelletier Tr & Henri Pelletier Trust, Regis H Pelletier, \$223,000, 19 Reservoir St  
Joan E Chase, Thu M Pham, \$124,000, 6 Constitution Wy Unit C  
Michael R McCabe Tr & Elizabeth A Abdoo Tr & Elizabeth A Abdoo Revocable Trust & Michael R McCabe Revocable Trust, Allan P & Patricia J Paduano, \$587,000, 10 Kerri Ann Cir  
Maroun Bechara, Radames Rodriguez-Cora & Melitza Nazario, \$480,000, 21-23 Arnold St  
David J & Colleen M Hamel, Gilberto Coplin, \$264,000, 49 Cross Rd  
Nelson N Sanabria & Iris Y Quinones, MD Shahjalal Uddin, \$405,000, 2 Apple Crest Dr  
Linda A Cottone-Wiley, Juana M Naveo, \$289,000, 1 Oak Meadow Ln  
Toll MA IV LLC, Wei Li Tr & Yue Zhang Tr & Zhang Revocable Trust, \$789,833, 65 Pine Tree Dr Unit 77  
Danny Realty Trust & Jean Abourjeili Tr, Maycon D Melo & Jessica D Melo & Thiago D Melo, \$480,000, 49 Pleasant St  
Michael J & Mary Lou Goujon, Lucia D Barrera De Hernandez & Augustin Barrera, \$320,000, 441 Broadway  
Paul Battaglia & Kyoko Hida-Battaglia, Elena E Campbell, \$187,000, 297 Broadway Unit 2  
Jason Nguyen & Hoang Do & Kathy Nguyen, Krystal Leigh & Dmytro Karamanesht, \$510,000, 25 Hunter Ave  
Brad William McMenamon, Chafiq Belcaid, \$450,000, 4 Girard Ave  
Salvatore Placenti & Shana M Pappalardo, Gina Diachisin & Dylan Conner MacLeod, \$355,000, 24 Joy Ter  
Michael C & Sarah E Sullivan, Eric V Artiles, \$315,000, 12 Oak Hill Dr

Joyce & Sebastian Faro & Annmarie J Morse & Anthony A & Linda A Petteruti, Rosa L & Carlos F Hernandez & Carlos A Hernandez, \$305,000, 19 Chadwick St  
Todd J Bernard, Jose Portillo, \$301,685, 18 Jasper St  
Joel K Noonan & Michael Noonan, Cruz N Taks-Hernandez, \$295,000, 7 Auburn St  
Maureen V McAndrew Tr & Helen M Vanasse Irrevocable Trust, David Griffin, \$260,000, 3 Peaslee Ter  
Christina Nault, Jason & Lyn Williams, \$647,500, 2 Patrick Wy  
Stephen A Mullane, Salvatore Placenti & Shana Pappalardo, \$459,900, 33 Thornton Ave  
Timothy J & Jolyne A Buckley, Bryan Michelson, \$385,000, 23 Huntress Ave  
Cassandra R McKenney/Cassandra R & Michael DiPietro, James Cromier & Maryjo A Alvarez, \$339,000, 11 Beverly St  
Leslie A Ferreira, Carlos R Quintana, \$325,000, 10 Clayton St  
Raymond F Grew Tr & Bowden 2017 Trust, Hui Young Lee, \$310,000, 14 Edgar St  
Diane M Blake & Vincent J & Ann Marie Zanfagna, Marie Doyle, \$204,900, 45 Christopher Dr Unit 128  
Francis J Kobrenski Tr & Kobrenski Family Trust, Luis A Vargas, \$190,000, 124 Camden St

NORTH ANDOVER

William A & Patricia B Davison, Jason & Jennifer Cherry, \$869,000, 365 Candlestick Rd  
Mohammad Yamin & Maryam Salehi-Ala Yamin, Scott & Carleen French, \$730,000, 32 Palomino Dr  
David G Roberts III, Kimberly Landry, \$307,500, 210 Chickering Rd Unit 102A  
Thomas & Renee Page, Bryan M & Margaux M Crabtree, \$725,000, 48 Sunset Rock Rd  
132 Academy Trust & Marie G Dow Tr & Leslie Dow Tr, Ryan & Alyssa Heffernan, \$612,000, 200 Bridle Path  
Surendra Mohan Satija & Gaurang Satija & Alka Satija & Dhara Satija, Dhruv Yogesh Manek, \$640,000, 18 Hepatica Dr Unit 33  
Michael Donohue, Meghan M Long, \$530,000, 55-57 Furber Ave  
Snell Family Realty Trust & William A Snell Tr, Keith F Barnard, \$303,000, 234 Main St  
N6 Properties LLC, William J Sinagra, \$269,900, 148 Main St Unit 0406  
Berry/114 Co LLC, Chloe Villavicencio, \$216,900, 8 Compass Point Unit M1  
Ayman Ibrahim & Taysir R Hassan, Scott Awley, \$405,000, 1105 Acorn Dr Unit 1105  
Michael McMains Tr & Alberta Realty Trust, Kreative Property Solutions LLC, \$400,000, 920 Johnson St  
Andrew C & Donna D Scoppa, Michael P & Lisa L Famiglietti Trs & 443 Bear Hill Realty Trust, \$690,000, 443 Bear Hill Rd  
Jean E Coufas/Jean E Couyioufas, Sutton Street Redevelopment LLC, \$600,000, 1-3

Surrey Dr Units 1 & 2  
Margaret S & Anthony J Laccetti, Acacio A De Barros Filho & Sibele R De Almeida Barros, \$583,900, 70 Candlestick Rd  
Joseph J L Martin, Sutton Street Redevelopment LLC, \$575,000, 477-479 Sutton St  
Jonathan T & Marsha A Heydenreich, Thaddeus Adams, \$425,000, 1907 Salem St  
Keith Thompson, William Alan & Meghan Lynn Sorel, \$348,000, 142 Berry St  
John D & Patricia C Heenan, Amanda V Donahue, \$194,000, 52 Farrwood Ave Unit 5  
Jose Antonio Rico & Kerry M Hughes-Rico, Matthew R Rosen & Gaetana A Dalesio-Spina, \$720,000, 3 Breckenridge Rd  
Barry T & Kelly M McGrath/Kelly M Gillen, Domito Co Inc , \$257,205, 19 Peters St  
Geoffrey & Linda Smith, Leon & Stefanie McKanas, \$649,900, 15 Huckleberry Ln  
Steven G & Kristin O Dardas, Peter J Venuti, \$435,000, 43 Glenwood St  
James N Mootrey Jr Tr & KLM Trust, Judith Ann Frulla Tr & Judith Ann Frulla Family Trust, \$269,900, 148 Main St Unit A-409  
Vincent J & April Grasso/April Viera, Lance Enaire, \$229,900, 32 Village Green Dr Unit 80  
Sandra Hafiz Inc, Sanjay S & Toral Patel, \$825,000, 9 Peach Tree Ln  
Kenneth & Hana DeRoche/Hana Urga, Stephen P & Elizabeth E Glowacki, \$485,000, 703 Middleton St  
Margaret M Cook, Justin Cook, \$407,000, 133 Autran Ave Unit B  
Deborah L Bennett, Winwin Properties LLC, \$102,818, 4 Fernview Ave Unit 4FV-5  
Nancy A Johnston, Philotimo Realty Trust LLC, \$150,000, 1717 Turnpike St  
Dennis J Casamasina Tr & Dominic J Casamasina & Doris E Casamasina Revocable Trust, Richard Vanasse III, \$12,000, Bay State Rd  
TKZ LLC, David P & Marianne Murphy, \$781,093, 185 Mill Rd  
Michael J Terlizzi & Aldene E Large Est, Stephen Hu, \$294,000, 180 Chickering Rd Unit 210C  
Marc Lamphier, Bhagirat Singh, \$520,000, 68 Sutton St  
Bryan M & Margaux M Crabtree, Lisa Grasso, \$504,000, 134 Milk St  
Lindsey Riordan, Loralee Pomilla, \$192,500, 60 Edgelawn Ave Unit 60EL-1  
Michael J & Jennifer A Gaiss, Min & Albert Gianforti, \$635,000, 79 Kara Dr  
Kyle & Meagan Kobierski, Dana R & Jonathan R Pena, \$425,000, 278 Barker St  
Ryan R Ford & Elizabeth A McBride, Christopher & Rebecca Healey, \$425,000, 33 Edmands Rd  
Charlotte S Murphy Revocable Trust & Charlotte S Murphy Tr, Carewell Properties LP, \$155,000, 871 Turnpike St Units 105 & 107  
Henry P Smith Jr & Pamela J Smith, Stephen Andrew & Heather Antonia Jay, \$1,100,000, 548 South Bradford St  
Ronald & Beth Ann Bennett, Vanessa R & David K Robinson, \$855,000, 207 Bear Hill Rd



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# AJ Pappas the Rocking Realtor

The name Pappas resonates throughout the Merrimack Valley, from farmers to tailors, developers, and merchants. However, one family member, AJ Pappas, decided to follow his dreams as a musician. AJ comes from a Proud Greek/Armenian Heritage. Traditionally, the children follow in the family business. AJ dreamt bigger. He wanted to ROCK!

At age ten, living in Salisbury, MA, AJ and his friends were typical. They played in the dunes, rode bikes, angered parents and listened to rock music. A nearby club, Mr. K's served as the local Temple of mystery and music, appealing to any pre-adolescent future rocker. Despite maternal protests, AJ gravitated to the venue. From the first beat of the drum and the rocking sound of the guitars attacking the night through open doors and windows, AJ was hooked

Early on, AJ's mom's (Rosemary) love of the Beatles and Stones piqued AJ's interest in music. His cousin (Ron Higgins) was a huge Metal fan. His family influences molded his tastes from classic Beatles to the more sinister sounds of Black Sabbath. Originally, a trained Sax player AJ turned his attention to bass guitar, following the footsteps of his Idol, Black Sabbath Bassist Geezer Butler.

Jim's Kabob in Lawrence served as the stage for AJ's first gig. At the rocking age of 14, with a band called Peace Through Music, AJ would sneak through a side door joining bandmates Mike Finocchiaro and Dave Torrisi on stage. The energy on stage and the excitement of the crowd is all AJ needed to see. He met his calling.

After High School AJ moved to Hollywood, attending The Musicians Institution. He graduated top of his class, becoming an instructor. At this point, he toured Hollywood, CA and Mexico with his band Driftwood. He played in such iconic venues as The Whiskey, The Troubadour and The Roxy. The same stages sweat on by the Doors, Led Zeppelin Janice Joplin, Jimi Hendrix decades earlier.

After Hollywood, the band moved back to New England. After a few years, the band started to fizzle out and AJ needed a new home. He Joins Eve to Adam a New York based band.

Tired of making no money AJ searches

Craigslist. The ad reads Bass player, must be ready to travel overseas, must understand Lemmy and James Jamerson. This audition was with Electric Blues Icon Popa Chubby



After auditioning, AJ Got the job and for the next 7 years traveled the Globe and shared the stage with Blues Royalty like Walter Trout, and Lance Lopez. He played in Africa, South America, Europe and numerous exotic countries.

After 7 years, AJ yearns to start a family. He leaves Popa and heads to Merrimack Valley. With no job, he accepts a seat with

Harvard American Repertory Theater. Having not read music in 20 years, he provided background music seated in the orchestra pit. This was not a lifelong dream. He then talked with Boston Born Johnny A, best known for his work with Peter Wolf, the Yardbirds and Grammy Nominated guitarist Gary Hoey a Lowell, MA native. AJ was ready to leave ART, when Johnny A and Gary Hoey both called.

AJ called Gary, but the spot was filled. However the conversation went well and the two became friends. AJ played a year with Johnny A and then Gary Hoey called. Gary had an available spot and five years later, they are still together.

Because touring does not always pay the bills, AJ needed some steady income. On advice from friends and family, AJ earned his Realtors License and works for The North Shore Realty Group, Salisbury MA, selling both residential and commercial property.

After meeting AJ when the Gary Hoey band was playing a benefit for the Veterans Northeast Outreach Center, he sat, post-performance sipping a beer. I introduced myself, praised his playing and he immediately turned conversation around to what I was doing with VNOC. He expressed his admiration for the work of the agency.

If you are music fan, please check out The Gary Hoey band. They are amazing thoughtful and willing to assist in anyway. I've talked with AJ and talked music, travel, food, real estate with AJ and I can tell you, he is not the stereotypical rocker, he is a class act and what I would like to call a friend.

Check out AJ Pappas on Facebook or email him [aj@ajpappasrealtor.com](mailto:aj@ajpappasrealtor.com) ♦



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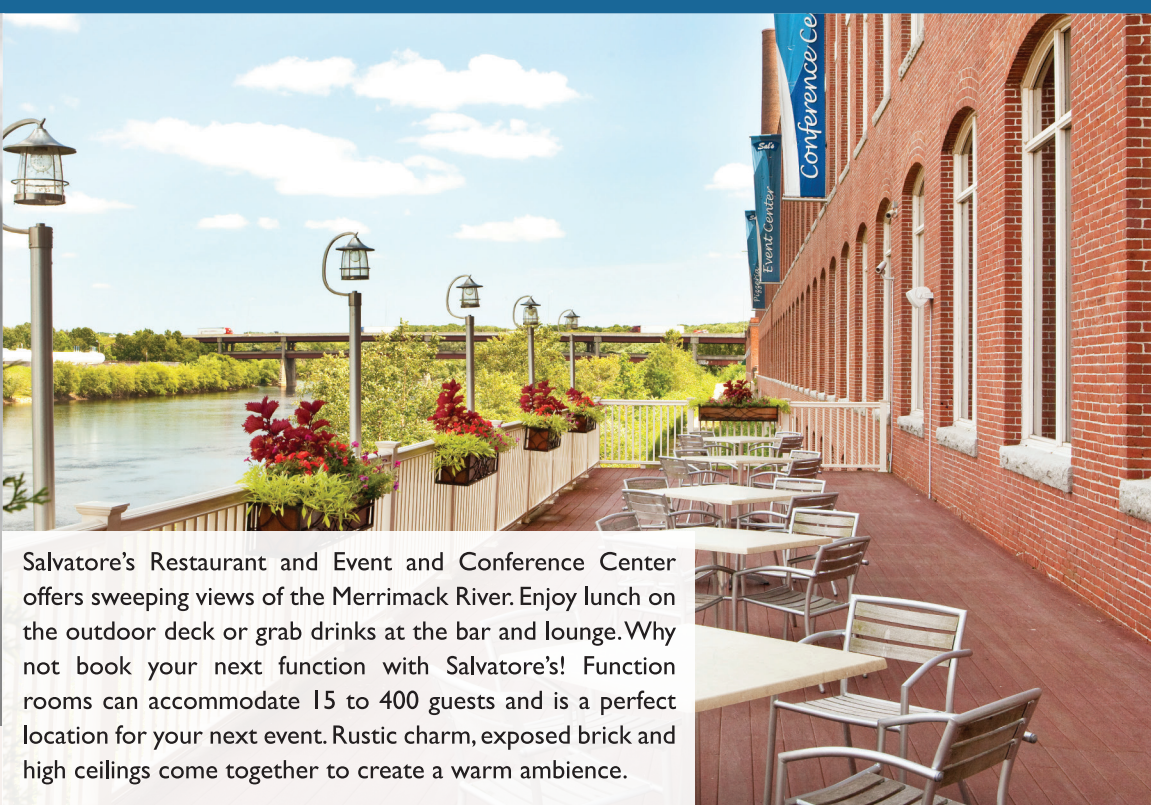


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